Daily Report

Latin America

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Cuba

Castro Havana PCC Assessment Meeting Speech

FL071624 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 30 Nov 87

[Speech by President Fidel Castro at the closing session of the PCC provincial assessment meeting in Havana City Province at the Palace of Conventions in Havana on 29 November—recorded]

[Text] [Applause, crowd chants, "Fidel! Fidel!"] Enough. [Words indistinct] wait.

Comrades: Our volunteer work of this Sunday is about to end. I really do not have many things to say. I have spoken many times during these past 3 days. I have given my opinion, criticism, and ideas on practically everything we discussed.

I think our people were also able to participate in all the discussions and all the ideas debated here through television. Since 3 days cannot be covered in a few minutes in a newscast, I imagine that on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday our television—television sometimes covers it live—and press will give the population the most extensive information available on our assessment meeting. Those who participated in this 3-day assembly cannot hide the fact that they are pleased with this meeting. We proceed with great satisfaction and with a very high opinion of our party's work, which has been the object of this analysis, this assessment. This satisfaction is not unfounded or something simply subjective. It is part of a conviction that we are better workers. We are truly rectifying. We are advancing.

We have had comrades from all provinces participate in this assembly meeting. We gave much attention to the idea of having the participation of the first secretaries of each of the provinces, the Isle of Youth special municipality, party leaders, as many members of the PCC Central Committee and Politburo as possible, state leaders, and practically all ministers. If someone has not been present it is because he had to attend an unavoidable international commitment or because he was out of the country. Some arrived early today and attended the morning session. I know of some comrades who did not want to miss the assessment meeting for any reason. Some had to leave and they expressed great regret at not being able to participate in the meeting.

Never has such a regional or provincial party given rise to so much interest, awakened so many expectations.

We have also had the great honor of having CPSU representatives participate in the meeting with us. [applause] The delegation is headed by Comrade Rybakov, who is participating for the second time in one of our assessment meetings. The first time was at the Playa municipality assembly meeting. Our debates, our meeting, the content and depth of those discussions awakened so much interest in him that I invited him to please participate with us in the PCC provincial assessment meeting. [applause] Despite the distance—it's a 30-hour roundtrip flight from the USSR to Cuba—we were greatly pleased to learn that he would attend. He has come and participated.

Another very symbolic gesture is the presence of representatives from a revolutionary party from a country that we greatly appreciate: an FSLN delegation from Nicaragua. [applause]

These are our guests. They are not here to observe our assessment meeting. I would say they are here more to participate as beloved brothers, members of the same family, or as members of the family to which we all belong. [applause]

I told Comrade Rybakov that if this assembly meeting had been held 18 months ago—I was telling him, explaining some topics and characteristics of the assembly meeting, what we discussed and why—I told him that if this assessment meeting had been held 18 months ago it would have been hard, very hard, because we would have had to analyze many things that were not progressing well. Those things are today reflected in the review of the efforts undertaken during these past 18 months, in the review of the battle undertaken. We could say that since the Third PCC Congress 2 years ago it has gained its greatest momentum during the past 1 and 1/2 years.

Many of these things appear in that assessment. I know of comrades who expressed their surprise with these words: We had no idea how badly we were doing. The worst thing is not that we were progressing badly, but that we are proceeding badly and not aware of it. We proceed incorrectly and believe that we are progressing well.

The list would be long if we named some of the things mentioned here, but it would be enough to remember the impression made on the day we learned that our Mambisa port workers were getting paid in dollars. That is just one of the many calamities that can begin to appear in an assessment.

But this does not mean that we think we are all working at our optimum ability, that everything is wonderful, or that we are going to do what is called triumphalism. One must take care with all things called triumphalism. Some use this little word. Sometimes it is a significant word and other times it is a very meaningful word because it stems from the rectification process.

There are some who instinctively felt that the errors and negative tendencies would continue weakening the revolutionary awareness of our people. It would continue weakening the revolution. Some thought that correcting negative tendencies would give way to petite bourgeois tendencies, possibilities, to anti-socialist and anti-communist behavior, as well as to reactionary possibilities.

There are some who think they are revolutionary but they are not. There are also some who are reactionary and do not know it. They act out of instinct. There are some little worms who think that this process of strong criticism and self-criticism is the time to intervene on behalf of bourgeois or liberal ideas, that it is the time to intervene on behalf of petite bourgeois dreams. They think that this is the time for the worms, reactionaries, and the counterrevolutionaries to participate in our debates. That is why it is very good to make it clear that this criticism and self-criticism is for revolutionaries and from revolutionary standpoints. [applause]

It is for revolutionaries from revolutionary standpoints, for Marxist-Leninists from Marxist-Leninist positions, for socialists and communists from socialist and communist standpoints. The reactionaries, counterrevolutionaries, and the petite bourgeois spirit have no business here, nothing in which to participate. It is good to clarify and define this so that everyone knows what we are doing and what our position is on this. Clearly, successes bother them, too. It is instinct among those who do not know they are reactionaries and it is bad faith among those who are consciously aware of being reactionaries, those who have a kind of skin allergy which shows itself in large welts in response to anything that is truly socialist, communist, Marxist-Leninist.

It hurts them if the revolution rectifies and it hurts them if the revolution advances. They would like to deny the revolution everything and they would like criticism to be from a pessimistic, defeatist standpoint. They would like the criticism to be from a liberal bourgeois, petite bourgeois point of view. Our criticism is, has to be, and will always be from a revolutionary standpoint because we have enough pride, dignity, and courage to criticize others and ourselves as much as necessary no matter how harshly. But we will always do it from an optimistic standpoint, not from a despicable and treacherous pessimism as experienced by those who do not believe in man or even in themselves, but as people who believe in man, the people, and themselves.

It is not bitter criticism. It is criticism we use to rectify, improve ourselves, advance. It is used to rectify errors, consolidate and advance our socialist, Marxist-Leninist, communist revolution. [applause]

It is the awareness of those values, the principles that we defend, our confidence in man, the party, and our members that are the essence and support of the satisfaction that we have all felt during these past few days. The representatives of our members and our excellent workers spoke about the ironworks plant, Planta Habana, the shipyards, the Enrique Varona, Vanguardia Socialista, and the many other important centers. They were once bulwarks but began to deviate, to become deformed. We have been speaking here, above all, of those centers, not where we progressed well or relatively well but primarily those where we proceeded incorrectly and actually very poorly. They were becoming symbols of distortions, errors, and negative tendencies.

This does not mean that men have changed. It means that the concepts have changed. The style has changed. That is why many of our delegates said that it was the same men, the same workers from the ironworks plant, who had so much success in a very short time, or the shipyard workers or the workers from the Enrique Varona Plant or from the electronics plant who made great advancements in the rectification process. For example, out of those 1,800 or 1,900 same workers from the electronics plant, only 1 person volunteered to work in the sugar harvest.

Comrade Lazaro Vasquez reminded us here of the days when dozens of thousands of workers from Havana worked for months in Camaguey, Ciego de Avila, and other places. Our pre-university students also worked entire months in the sugar harvest in Matanzas Province. We did not even have one machine, one harvester to cut and harvest cane. At that time we had to mobilize 350,000 people to work in the harvest. It's amazing.

Out of 1,900 workers, there was 1 who volunteered. The day would come when there would be 1 out of 2,000 teachers who would be willing to fulfill an internationalist mission or 1 person out of 2,000 to work on an internationalist mission, not to teach, but to fulfill a mission of great sacrifice and risk, thousands of kilometers from our fatherland.

That was an alienating, distorting, egotistical, individual road. It was a road on which values were left behind. Also left behind was the internal spirit of solidarity, the spirit of national and international fraternity. No other people have such enthusiasm to fight and so many patriotic and revolutionary virtues.

Volunteer work was being forgotten. It was nothing more than entertainment for adults and young people. It was a formal thing. What we have seen today is impressive; it is a miracle and is expressed in everything. It is precisely all these things of which we are proud of now, these changes of ideas.

This was expressed by the comrade director of the FEEM [Federation of Mid-Level School Students], which will have its congress on 5 and 6 December. They said: If you give us materials, we will repair two buildings. If you give us the resources, you won't need to send in anyone else. Perhaps someone may have to be sent now to direct us in performing the work, but after a while we won't need anyone because we will know as much as any carpenter, bricklayer, or construction worker.

This is the spirit in which the workers pledged to repair their own factories, the spirit under which the workers of the Salvador Allende Hospital said that they did not know how to speak when construction or public health

topics were discussed because they had become construction workers. The communists are heading this, even the surgeons. I found this out. I've seen them wearing gloves. They were very comfortable. I share that principle. It would not make sense to send the best surgeon to a permanent brigade to do the party's work for 10, 15, or 30 days. It is not just a matter of converting each workshop into a school but, because it is necessary for development, it becomes a school.

When I've met specialists in this work they've seemed content, like one who is rested. They work all their lives and then do something new. They feel proud when they are capable of measuring themselves as a worker, when they are able to do physical work, to create with their hands and not just with their intelligence. I have seen them; they seemed happy. How do they learn from the worker? What an example of modesty, what a lesson in humbleness for the party member. He becomes a specialist, not just in surgery but now also in another field. He shares from day to day, 10 hours of work with the bricklayers. They are assistants. He is an aide. It is a lesson in humbleness.

This could only be possible in a revolution, and not just in any revolution, but only in a very profound revolution. What a lesson for the worker. It provides him with an incentive and a lesson when he sees that the surgeon has become his modest worker.

The day I visited one of the projects under construction by the Marx contingent at the Salvador Allende Hospital, I was impressed. I could do no more than reflect and think on all this because this was truly moving. That became a communist school. There was a feeling of equality there. The worker felt honored. The intellectual, the specialist felt honored.

That is what we saw there. This is what has given us confidence, optimism, promise, because we have seen a clear and definite revelation that the spirit of solidarity and the revolutionary awareness expressed in volunteer work is something more than an idea, more than a beautiful feeling. It is something that is translated very concretely in things that seem like dreams, in things that seemed impossible.

If we were to lose this awareness, if we lose that spirit, what would we have left? We would have a small country confronting the empire. We would have a small country trying to construct socialism from underdevelopment and poverty, ignorance, lack of culture. What would we have left? How could we defend ourselves or develop? That is not simply a matter of ideas but of definite concepts.

We are amazed. The comrade said that there were many basements here that they have converted. The Blas Roca brigade workers have told us that they have made many trips, completed many kilometers, goals, with so much productivity and cost. The comrade from the shoe factory told us how many more shoes have been made. She reported a 26-percent increase in production with much higher quality, with a large decrease in the number of workers. The CENIC [National Scientific Research Center] told us that they would be reducing their staff of 1,400 to 600. The workers discussed this. They were the ones who decided that there were more workers there than needed and they decided what could be saved and rationed. It is not [words indistinct] from top to bottom when they told us they produced much more. The ironworks factory told us how many millions of parts they produced with half of the staff, with the same young workers they had there. The shipyard workers told us that their production would be 35 or 40 million [not further specified] with just a few more workers. They are going to develop their investments.

They tell us that they are going to export so many millions in convertible currency and are going to reduce costs here. Then we start talking about numbers, about millions, about hundreds of millions, because Maximo said that the minibrigades are going to produce 300 million in construction next year, and they are going to produce that without a single extra penny in wages, with the same wages that they were paying.

Sometimes people talk about economic miracles. What kind of miracle is this one? What kind of miracle is it to produce 300 million in construction projects without a single extra penny in wages? How about when Comrade (Sife) tells us that the same workers of the phantom enterprises in Marianao, which were only profitable because they stole and sold the materials, are now not only working a lot of hours but also have high productivity? They are also teaching the young people who joined the enterprises who had not been going to school or working before. Then miraculous, extraordinary figures started to appear. They had produced 400 [unit not specified] in 8 months, and now they were producing 500 in 3 months. That is the way that one of the many headaches of a Third World country, the maintenance problem, and so on, can be resolved at incredibly low cost. I am certain that the day the figures are computed they will show that the social minibrigades are going to be making repairs at a cost 10 times less than that incurred by the housing maintenance enterprises—if not 10, at least 8; if not 8, at least 6 times less than before. Of that I am sure. They have saved on a great deal of administrative personnel and increased direct production work.

As I said, that translates into hundreds of millions. And it will translate into billions! Billions! At the national level the minibrigades alone will be producing, contributing around 800 million to the gross national product by 1990.

Now, if all of them perform like the shipyards, the ironworks, the footwear factory; if this work spirit spreads to the textile industry, the steelworking industry,

the construction professionals, agriculture, with its 8-hour day in two shifts; if this work spirit spreads to hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers, hundreds of thousands of industrial workers—then, how much would it be with practically the same wages? Or perhaps higher wages, such as the ones the agricultural workers will get as a decision of the revolution, as something absolutely justified, since the initial idea had been to keep paying ridiculous wages to agricultural workers, in a social process in which men and women have all kinds of opportunities. Who was going to stay there cultivating foodstuffs, producing sugar, rice, tubers, vegetables, or milk at ridiculous wages?

That is why in this rectification process one of the things we did was to raise 40 percent of the lowest wages in agriculture, as was done in the hospitals for those who ensured medical care, who were neither doctors or nurses but had to wash, mop the floors, and take care of the patients day in and day out.

This process has also entailed social justice, a social justice that is rectifying a certain tendency to increase the higher-scale wages, allowing some people to get as much as 1,000 pesos without the corresponding production, and yet a humble worker was getting 100, 102, 105 pesos.

Many things are involved in this rectifying process.

I was saying that this movement translates into billions, and this without raising wages except for the raises brought about by fair distribution instead of wages that did not correspond to production. This will be done with correct norms, with fair norms, with rational norms. I ask: Can anyone imagine the situation if the minibrigades alone—with perhaps 70,000 or 80,000 members throughout the country—are able to produce 800 million? They are barely 5 percent of the total number of workers in the whole country. I feel that the production workers are capable of an output of 800 million if this style, if this spirit is transmitted to all the country's workers. How many billions would the economic value of this rectifying effort come to?

Therefore, it is not simply a matter of ideas, of awareness. These ideas and awareness translate into deeds, into concrete results.

I have spoken of material production. What results would the spirit of the minibrigades have if it was conveyed to teachers, health workers, the service sector? The FEEM comrade was expressing her satisfaction with what the teachers are doing now, the pleasure of seeing them there at night working with the students, strengthening the education process, raising the level of education.

How would this spirit be conveyed if it was transferred to all health workers or transmitted to the health workers as is now being done? They would resolve, construct, attend to the citizenry and the ill.

How can the value of all of this be calculated in terms of well-being and satisfaction for the people? The capitalists in terms of their own material production place a value on their services. They include their services. They give an economic value to their services. They translate it into money. How much money would those educational services of which we spoke cost in a developed society? How much would those health services cost? Those services are the product of hundreds of thousands workers, of approximately 600,000 compatriots. How much would those high-quality services be worth? We could use money as a measuring stick. We could use money as a measuring stick as the capitalists do. How many billions would these services be worth in quality and quantity?

As we discussed today in the health sector, things that previously seemed impossible have been done. These things seem impossible or, more than that, are impossible in a Third World country. They are not possible. Even in many developed countries, industrialized capitalist countries, these things are not available.

We said the work of the family doctor is available to each household. Each family has at its doorstep a doctor and a nurse watching over their health. They don't even go to the polyclinic anymore unless they are referred by another doctor. As soon as these doctors becomes specialists in the field of general medicine, these consultations will decrease. We will need a super-specialist in the polyclinic for a super-consultation. That is really what they do now. Within a few years, not even that... [changes thought] We can't have a laboratory, x-ray equipment in each family doctor's house-office. We will need some technical services. In reference to the impossible things that Comrade Maria Cristina was talking about, these things are impossible in Haiti or in any Latin American country, including the richer ones. I don't know.

If one speaks about a physical therapy gym, others think: What a strange word; where did it come from? What is it? This is something that is not available in a polyclinic. It is something that can happen relatively soon in 400 polyclinics. The gym could meet the needs of more than 200,000 people in 3 months. It would fulfill the needs of more than 1 million people throughout the country.

But we speak of these things as if they were natural. We no sooner hear about these things than we begin planning on expanding on and executing these ideas. We begin determining how many specialists we will need and whether they will be specialists in sports medicine or rehabilitation, as our public health minister said. We immediately become concerned with how many cubic

meters are needed for this and if the drafts for the new polyclinics include this area or whether they should be included at all and the gym should be next to the clinic [words indistinct].

In the United States, in the United States, [repeats himself] the rich empire, they use those terms and that language. They discuss those things. Yes, the multimillionaire can go to a large clinic, but this is not possible for the masses. Let Comrade (Gotre) tell us how many operations have been performed in only 13 months. Let him tell us how schedules, parameters have been broken and the process itself speeded up. Let him tell us how they have acquired efficiency, how they have saved hundreds of lives. He's not talking about surgery for appendicitis. That's the kind of thing that is perhaps mentioned in a Third World country.

He is talking about heart surgery for children, open-heart surgery with or without extracorporeal circulation. That's what he's talking about. The comrade from Centro Habana talks about multiple-use equipment for transplants, to transmit, to utilize the transplant technique: heart, heart and lungs, liver, kidneys. This, you will understand, would have been unreal even if we ourselves had talked about it 10 years ago, unreal and undreamed of in any other Latin American country—I am speaking plainly—or any other Third World country.

When we talk about the Ecuadoran children whose lives were saved, it is nothing extraordinary. The children were going to die. Their families thought about going to our embassy. Actually, this was not the case here. No, the country's authorities got in touch with our embassy. They were representatives of certain institutions that faced the problem. This case involved the country's representatives and institutions. A plane coming back from Peru stopped over, brought the children here, and you see what excellent progress they are making.

The parents wrote a letter, a beautiful letter. They wrote at the end: You can do what others can't. I asked (Gotre): What does that mean? He said, well, the fact is that they asked a lot of people for help. They all said I can't, we can't. The meaning of that sentence is that Cuba said yes, and Cuba was able to do it, and Cuba did it, and Cuba saved their lives. Cuba did not only save the lives of the children but also performed constructive surgery. So, this becomes a sort of solidarity symbol. It was not done as a propaganda gesture. It was a natural thing for our country to do.

I read that after only a few days the parents of one child already owed $10,000. They came to Cuba. Any child with this kind of injury or any other is attended to immediately. No one is surprised by that. It is the most natural thing in the world. But these are things dreamed of—or perhaps not even dreamed of—in other societies.

The comrade talked about the multiple trauma ward we should have in the future as a sign of progress. Any other country in the world would talk about such a ward as something for the year 2025. Here all these ambitious objectives are discussed as possible things. We talk about whether to have one or two, three or four. A specialist tells us, well, there have to be a lot so we can have a 24-hour watch. I was myself thinking: We'll have to establish one in Matanzas. We'll have to establish another in Cienfuegos. We need to have one in almost all the provinces. There are 3 or 4 in Havana alone with its 2 million inhabitants.

Doctors, doctors. We are getting as many as we want. And they are good doctors. Since productivity will grow in the material sphere, more citizens will be able to join the sphere of services. If a doctor has to stand watch, we will have a doctor to stand watch. If we need two centers, we'll have two centers. As long as we are only able to have one, we'll have one. Maybe ambulances. Then two, three, four ambulances. The point is that these things are discussed as something normal.

We could have talked about other programs. (Gotre) explained the method and program to detect congenital malformations, whether life-threatening or not. If they are life-threatening, we can cut short the pregnancy in the first few weeks, instead of 8 or 7 months, or even 3 or 4 months. We'll know.

We could have talked about the polyclinics and family doctors without a single infant mortality case. Of course, infant mortality cases do not only depend on medical care. There are cases who simply cannot live after birth. The polyclinic cannot save those children. But it does mean that every child who went to those polyclinics was given the best treatment, because they did not have a single death.

I always ask at the polyclinics, how many deaths did you have? Three, two, five? What were the causes, I ask. I find that many had conditions that were not compatible with life. And even those cases, which so traumatize the parents, will cease to be, no matter if they are congenital malformations involving the heart or any other. Even those. This is a sophisticated program. I can assure you that many developed countries do not have this program.

And if we see that we can accomplish these marvels through hard work, how do we do it? How can a Third World country do it? Of course, we get it through hard work. Of course, it is in large part because of the excellent relations we have with the socialist countries, especially the excellent economic relations with the Soviet Union. But we are not exempt from the damage caused by the international economic crisis. We have to import resources from other areas. Yet, how can we do these things? Only if we work well.

If we work well, we can do whatever we want. We can make the best use of those resources we have today. But we can't be lazy, bum around, waste time. We were deviating from the correct path. That is, if we were on the correct path 100 percent at any time! We cannot say that we were always 100 percent right all the time. But we are doing better. Without so many incorrect things, think how much we will be able to accomplish if we keep to the correct path, if we choose the best options, if we do our best or try to. We can get practically all we want.

I submit to you that this rectification battle is not... [changes thought] well, yes, it is a battle of ideas, but ideas that turn into results and actions fundamental to our people's future; ideas that turn into material wealth, material wealth [repeats himself], that turn into goods and services, with quantity and quality, for the people.

This means that in these times of international crisis and in the year in which our country is facing the most difficulties; when our convertible currency imports have had to be reduced to half of what was considered the indispensable minimum; when we are importing almost a fourth of what we were importing in 1985—or rather, in 1984—solutions start appearing all over. There are solutions to save foreign exchange, solutions to obtain foreign exchange, solutions to substitute this import and the other—in the most difficult year.

We are beginning to see the results of these ideas turned into action. How could we build 50 child care centers without these ideas, without this rectification? How? There was no way to build a child care center. The state, the central government, the party leadership concluded that Guanabacoa needed a child care center. I want you to know, comrades, that the state, the government, and the party were unable to reach a decision to build a child care center in Guanabacoa. This was because there was no labor force, no spirit, no construction capacity. There was no construction capacity.

You called the MICONS [Ministry of Construction] and told them that as the ministry in charge of construction they should please build a center in Guanabacoa because there was a new factory—call it the ironworks, if you will—that needed labor and did not have it. Or you told them that it was a pressing situation because 200 women had had to pay 70, or 80, or 60 pesos in addition to meals so that someone would take care of their kids. But MICONS was unable to build a single center, not a single one. Asking them to please build one center caused them to swoon. You ran the risk of having the comrade heading the ministry collapse, have his blood pressure go up, have him lose consciousness, faint. It was something terrible [chuckles] to have to build a child care center in Guanabacoa with all the other commitments we had and all the projects we never finish.

If you said, let's work with discipline and build a center in Guanabacoa, you could be sure that it would take up to 3 or 4 years to build the center in Guanabacoa. Then they would say, well, this hospital and this factory were not finished because we had to build a child care center in Guanabacoa. Those were the methods we called technocratic, bureaucratic. They were giving up with the people, giving up volunteer work.

Don't put the zero to the right; put it to the left. A zero to the left, unless you use a period, doesn't mean a thing. If you put the zero to the right, it reads 10. But the technocrats, the bureaucrats could not make this elementary calculation. They were people who thought they were revolutionaries without knowing they were reactionaries. They write the zero to the left.

The difference between a revolution and degeneration lies in placing the people to the right or to the left. If you put them to the right, you multiply [applause]—place the zero the left; don't place it to the right. You will then not be able to build the child care center in Guanabacoa or anywhere else. Nor will you fix the ironworks or the shipyards. You will fix nothing. Cast volunteer work aside. Cast conscience aside. Try to resolve everything with money. And we will have Miami, not Havana. We will have capitalism. We will never have socialism, never mind communism.

It's not that we are dismissing compensation or anything like that, or even the socialist formula of payment. The leader of the Blas Roca contingent said as much here. They said they did not want overtime, they did not. I said, no. We don't want bonuses, they said. Well, that's something else. But I told them: We are going to pay you the hours you work. And we will pay you according to your classification: truck driver, bulldozer operator, etc. We are going to apply the formula. You will receive socialist payment. And you will work in a communist spirit.

We are realistic, we understand. We don't sacrifice a worker on a whim. We think not only about the worker; we think about his wife, his children, his family, his needs. The things he can resolve on his own—we don't have to.

This is not the case of the minibrigades. They work 8 hours; sometimes 11 and 12. I am talking about people working 12, 14, 16 hours. The minibrigade member is linked to his factory. We would be creating chaos if we began to tell the minibrigade worker, listen, we're going to have a really big payroll. Let's start putting down the hours. It is perfectly correct for the minibrigade member to work with the wages he receives in the factory, as a rule. The state can then compensate the factory. But these contingents that become almost professionals—and the good thing about the minibrigade is that the worker does not feel estranged from his workplace. He does not feel estranged from his factory. He does not become a construction professional. He goes there to the construction site for as long as he wants. He might be there 10 years. He knows that whenever he wants to he can return to the factory. If some day he wants some

stability he can go back to the factory. In the case of these contingents involved in special projects, they become almost professional construction workers.

But I want to say that we are realists and we take these principles very much into account. It's a socialist form of payment, but a communist spirit of work. We have to combine the two: socialist payment with a communist work spirit.

You heard here what happened with the youth contingent that worked at the El Gato project, how they worked any time of day or night. They were being paid factory wages. We have seen some of those problems. We said, let's study this business about the wages by agreement very carefully. It brings a lot of complications and problems. I said: Don't touch it. In a factory we can in an orderly manner... [changes thought] The subjective factors come up. When subjective factors are instilled in the worker anything can be done. The worker's response is always the best. It is always excellent.

Now, what were we going to do if we didn't resort to these mass methods, these revolutionary methods, if we didn't resurrect the minibrigades? It's not a matter of building a single child care center anymore. One center seems ridiculous now. Now we talk about 50. It used to be that 50 would have taken 50 years, not only because there was a lack of labor but also because there was a lack of brains. They had no imagination. They said that a child care center was a social expenditure. Social expenditure is no good; production expenditure is good, as if those who were going to work in the factories were oxen, cows, horses, mares, mules, and donkeys, instead of human beings, men and women with their problems; especially women with their problems.

So, their reasoning was: social expenditure over here, investment in material goods production over there. But they were left alone in their factory. Production can't be carried out this way. The Spanish adviser said it. It was really moving to hear our Spanish friend tell us that man had to be considered. We must ask the worker: How did the honeymoon go? Ask him: How's the kid? Ask him about his problems. That is what is meant by attention to man. That tops it all—that capitalists might understand the need to take care of man. That tops it all—that there might be plans or concepts that ignore the need to attend to man.

When they say no child care center, these are technocratic, bureaucratic, reactionary conceptions. They are denying reality, the fact that a child care center cost 225,000 or 250,000 pesos. We are now building them without additional wage expenditures, with zero wage expenditure. We are doing it with the work of the student, the minibrigade, grandmothers like Juana Alonso, like Petra. Juana Alonso worked 600 hours and she's 75. That came out at lunchtime. I told her: They are always changing your age. Sometimes they say 70, other times 73, others 76. She said: I was born in 1902. What day? I believe she answered 6 June 1902. So, she's 75.

With the work of these compatriots, the minibrigade members, we are now building 50 without affecting production. Each one of these centers, which cost so little, means 250 women can join the work force in production and services as highly-skilled workers, as technicians, professionals, doctors, engineers, draftsmen. Young women! Grandmothers don't need child care centers! It's the young women who need the centers.

They just couldn't get it into their heads, the idea that a child care center was indispensable for production and services, and that housing was also indispensable for economic and social development; the same for the day schools. Of course, these concepts have been rectified. It is a matter of concepts, technocratic concepts, part of this reactionary remnant. Everything was bad for them. The rural schools were very bad. They clashed with the plans.

I was explaining this to the Latin American economists the other day when they asked me what the rectification process was. I explained at length. It's on record. And I didn't even explain it all. I only explained some of the outrages here. All of them clashed with the plans, or they ended up by linking the student, paying him by agreement—I don't know how they did it—even a teenager. They made a distinction between one situation and another.

I said: We'll build 50 child care centers, the ones they used to say would take 50 years, because there were 5 planned in the 5-year period—a hundred years to meet the needs of 19,500. And this did not include them all. The miraculous minibrigades now build 100 in 2 years. The miraculous minibrigades are now going to build 300 in the rest of the country in 3 years. Three hundred child care centers. It is something miraculous, isn't it?

None were going to be built. Three hundred child care centers; 400 in all; some 85,000 mothers joining production and services; to be built in 4 years, counting this one—in Havana, only 2 years—half of the ones needed. And we are talking about one thing only. And no one fainted. There was no crisis. No one fainted. In Guanabacoa, alone, three were completed.

I told the comrade: You are going to finish up the year with three. He said: There's one to go. I told him: Do it, man. What's one more for us? We went to Plaza and they needed two more. I told the comrade: Write it down; include it. If we can build 50, we can build 53, 55. That's no exaggeration.

I asked her [not further identified]: Do you have the labor? She says: Yes. Can you do it? Yes. Well, then, don't worry. We'll give you the materials. This is why you saw that I insisted so much. The key is in that: that

we have the materials. The centers [as heard] alone this year have built 600 doctor's home-offices. They are working on 11 schools, 10 polyclinics—and they are going to be working on 34 before the end of the year.

Comrade Zoila [not further identified] was telling us that she has 60 small schools. I can just imagine what it is like to have 60 small conduct schools [escuelitas de conducta] spread throughout the city. Today, Zoila is rich. When we asked how many special schools were needed, the province most probably studied this and decided that 24 special schools were needed. There are schools for children who have eye problems; there are schools for handicapped children; there are schools for children with hearing problems; and there are other conduct schools that are also necessary. If a child does not receive a proper education he will become a common criminal and not a worker like the one the director of Macaren School spoke to us about. If that child does not receive a proper education he cannot become a musician. The comrades told us that 24 special schools were needed, and 24 special schools are being built.

You tell me whether without this rectification process the city of Havana could have called on the Construction Ministry and the People's Government and said: Listen, friends, comrades, for the love of God—no longer for the love of Marx, Lenin, or Engels, [laughter, applause] but for the love of God [applause]—would you please build the 24 special schools that we need? They would have probably thought, and not without reason, that we were all crazy. Had we asked for one, they would have told us that they could not do it, and they really could not because they did not have the manpower. They had nothing. There was total demoralization.

Today we only have to say that 50 day-care centers must be build. The truth is that we do not even have to say this; all we have to do is ask how many centers are needed. When we asked we were told that 100 centers were needed because there were many children who wished to enroll in the centers. So they decided to build the 100 day-care centers in 2 years. But the 100 day-care centers in 2 years is not all they are building. They are also building 24 special schools. We also asked them if they knew how many old polyclinics we had operating in run-down houses where poor services were being offered. They said 20. So we said: Well, go ahead and build new ones. We also asked them whether they could, in a few months, build 600 family doctor home-offices in 600 different locations so that when the 600 doctors—500 doctors plus those who had joined the plan earlier and did not have a home-office—would have their home-office. They said yes. In a few days they found places for these home-offices and organized the brigades. They talked to the people and factories and organized the brigades.

Can you imagine those MICONS enterprises that never finished the work they began—and I repeat that it is not a problem of manpower but a problem of awareness—doing this. Well, lack of awareness makes man helpless, incapable of resolving problems. If we had asked them to build those 600 family doctor home-offices, I wonder what would have happened? What do you think would have happened? Can you just imagine that conversation?

A Politburo meeting to which the minister of construction and the president of the People's Government are asked to attend and asked to build those 600 family doctor home-office and not even suggesting the expansions to be made at the Gonzalez Cordoba Hospital, the Neurosurgery Institute, the Cardiology Institute; the building of an intensive therapy ward and more operation rooms at the Salvador Allende Hospital; and that this and that needs to be expanded—today, all this would be done immediately—but, what would those comrades have thought? We would have been faced with a revolution that could not even build a single family doctor home-office or a day-care center. Is that a revolution? What is that? Helplessness and incapacity. It is true that a plan could be drafted, an excellent plan, but life brings problems; life is constantly coming up with new problems, and we must be prepared to face those new problems. We cannot keep ourselves tied up in a straitjacket; we must have our reserves. Our huge reserves are in our people. The most important force we have is manpower, and it is from here that wealth comes. We have huge reserves of this.

Of course, we need construction material, but this material is produced with work. Work makes it possible for us to make an investment or pay off that investment. We were lacking money to purchase certain products. However, we told the workers that they had to create more resources to buy this and that, and you saw what they did. Centavo by centavo they gave $10,000. This money can help buy equipment or food for the minibrigades. In 1988 we will be investing hundreds of thousands to keep those 245 kitchens the capital city minibrigades will be using. Well, we may use that money for a day-care center or a therapeutic gym. We will see which of those is more necessary. But, by doing this, they have created a resource.

When I met with the minibrigades I said that we should promote tourism as a means to create resources. If we don't have resources we must create them, and if everyone works properly we have many ways of creating these resources. Today, our ironworks plant is exporting $2 million worth of material, something that we were not doing in the past. Promoting tourism, treating the tourist properly, can also produce resources. The oil workers can produce more oil; everyone in his own field can help produce more resources. The sugarcane workers can help with more sugarcane; the citrus sector can help with more citrus products. We can invest more in these areas and later profit from this investment.

All this translates into a bit more fuel being used, but if we save we can compensate for this. With a bit more work on the part of the geologists and drillers we can get

all the fuel we need to see our plans completed. Deep down, all this means that more fuel is being used, but not that much. To produce the extra 1.4 million tons of cement we are planning to produce by 1990 we will need approximately 200,000 tons of oil. But our drillers are increasing our oil production by 200,000 tons a year. A single thermoelectric plant, the Matanzas thermoelectric plant, is saving us 70,000 tons of oil. This is the kind of savings we can achieve if we work hard to complete the works we have begun. Once the Cienfuegos thermonuclear plant is finished and operational, the electricity it will produce will save us 2.5 million tons of oil. Anyone understands that 1.4 million tons of cement is essential for all the plans we have throughout the country. All the work we are currently doing does not even add up to 150,000 tons of oil used in a dry processing plant or 200,000 tons used in the wet processing plant. We have proven that if we need these things we can produce them.

When Maximo read next year's plan we were truly impressed. He spoke at length about next year's plan. He said that the minibrigades are planning to build 13,000 homes, 50 day-care centers—approximately 55 day-care centers—and that they also plan to complete the work they have already begun at the 24 special schools and 20 polyclinics. They are also going to build 600 family doctor home-offices—this year these home-offices will be bigger—and 28 bakeries—a single bakery would have meant a crisis within the ministry, but the minibrigades are going to build 28 in a single year. They have also said that they will be working on the Neurosurgery Institute, on the Gonzalez Cordoba Hospital, and on another, another, another [repeats himself] hospital, and then we will continue on another, another, and yet another. They are also working on something that you have not heard much about. They are working on a gigantic project, the construction of the National Exposition Center. This center will be excellent to teach the people and children, awaken vocation among the children, to take visitors to a place where they can see the economic, social, scientific, and technical progress made by our country. It is a great project being done by the minibrigades; they are doing many things. I think that next year they will be working, simultaneously, on 1,500 or 1,600 different projects in the capital city. What does this mean? What does all this mean?

That we can now begin thinking about the kind of city we want and decide how we want our city to look by the year 2000—and the year 2000 is not that far away. We can decide how many new houses we will need in the capital city. However, we must not forget that all that we are doing here, all that we began to do in the capital city in 1987, is what the whole country will be doing in 1988. This is why we say that production of construction material is something serious because we are not only meeting the demands of the capital city workers, but of the workers throughout the country. In 1990 we will all be doing the same amount of work throughout the country; in 1990 the minibrigade movement will have been working for 4 years. It will be the third year of their work in the provinces; and if we find ourselves with extra manpower we will also use them in this movement and we will pay them. That is, the eastern provinces will not be able to get the manpower they need, but we will send in youths to help them. They will need them.

There are also other projects. We have plans to develop tourism and we have excellent places in mind. We have selected ideal spots for tourism. We are ready to start exploiting a key off the coast of Ciego de Avila; we also have the Santa Lucia beach; the beaches in the northeastern sector of the country; and beaches on the southern coast of Santiago de Cuba. These are all possibilities. We are finding important, very important possibilities, in this area. These are all investment possibilities. This work will be a joint project among several enterprises.

Tourism is special. It is not like our nickel, sugarcane, or machine-building industries. There are international organizations that have the money and experience; they have the markets for tourism. This is the type of activity that makes it easy, very convenient, and very useful to have several enterprises working on it at the same time. These are some of the possibilities on which we are working. Perhaps we will even have to speed up our plans for the construction of chains of hotels. Don't you think we have every reason to continue improving our work style and efficiency? A hotel like that cannot take 14 years to build, which was what happened with the Ancon Hotel. A hotel like that must be built in 18 or 20 months, 24 months at the most. We must learn all the techniques, acquire the experience, to build quickly. This must be done with the help of the computers. Who knows, perhaps some day we will have to begin building hotels at the same speed as we are building the day-care centers. It is a possibility, and we must be happy.

If your country is making it through this year with $600 million, just imagine what it would be like if we had an extra $500 million, $1 billion, or $2 billion. I am talking about a dollar that is worth something, not a dollar that keeps dropping every day. I am talking about a dollar at its 1984 or 1985 value. We are using the dollar as an example; if we were to speak of the yen, lira, or pesetas, we would go crazy. We have no other alternative but to use that currency, the international currency.

There are possibilities, great possibilities. However, we cannot not develop tourism without this rectification process. If we did, it would be chaos. Just imagine a hotel operating like the ironworks plant was operating before we repaired it. Just imagine 3,000 workers and 100 tourists, total chaos and disorder, a total lack of productivity, etc., etc. I am optimistic about the development in many areas, even tourism. I am seeing a better organized and working people; a more efficient and aware people.

Tourism and low defenses just don't mix; our defenses were getting low, we had no antibodies. We had something like AIDS; the technocrats and bureaucrats were suffering from something we could call idelogical AIDS.

something like AIDS. [laughter] Our defenses also dropped. If we were to raise our defenses, can, or can't we do it? Or can we be bought for $4? [applause] Can anyone just come here, buy us for $4 and corrupt us? With our defenses high, we can do it. We can do it with our people's capacity, with their intelligence, their virtues. I am sure we can be very good hosts, and if there is extra manpower in the eastern provinces we could use them to build those hotels. We could say: Well, the youths we have recruited will be used to build the hotels. We are going to build hotels; we have the manpower. Perhaps the day will come when we will have to ask the eastern provinces to give the minibrigade movement a hand. Perhaps the day will come when we will ask them for their extra manpower to help build the hotels. If we have to build the hotels we will have to put some 10,000 men to work on a key; to build a hotel on a key. Another 10,000 workers could be sent to another area—then we will be needing tens of thousands of workers—to build with the same spirit we have seen in the workers of the Blas Roca contingent.

Tell me, if we work with the same spirit the Blas Roca contingent workers have, with the same spirit the Julio Diaz or Salvador Allende Hospitals workers have, can or can't we build hotels? [Delegates shout: "Yes"; applause] If we work with the same spirit the Miguel Enriquez Hospital workers or the Antillana de Acero workers have, can we or can't we build hospitals? Can we or can't we build factories? [applause] If we work with the same spirit the El Gato project workers have, can we or can't we do anything we want? If we work with the same spirit the minibrigade members who are working on the 50 day care-centers have, can or can't we build what we want? It is in our hands to do this. In whose hands, other than ours, could this be in? Were we going to blame the imperialists for our own stupidity? Imperialism already has too many faults, and it does not need ours; it does not need to be blamed our own problems.

Is socialism progressing or not? Can progress in the country be achieved by developing this spirit? Just imagine what it will be like when we have 30,000 or perhaps 40,000 minibrigade members. There will be no limit to what we can do. There are times, however, when we will find ourselves with more workers than we really need because we need more construction material. Just imagine what it would be like if 750,000 of the 800,000 workers in the capital city were working with the same spirit of a member of the minibrigades.

Just imagine what it would be like if the workers at a school, factory, hospital, or any other work center were to work with this same spirit. But as I have said, we are just beginning. The minibrigade movement has become a vanguard movement because of its characteristics and problems, because of the way its members handle the problems they encounter, and because of their enthusiasm. More and more workers are joining the movement. Now we also hear the students saying: Give us the material; give us the construction material we need and we will do the necessary repair work at the schools. Perhaps one of these days we will put them to building schools and not only to do repair work. There are some schools that need some repairs, but there are others that must be built. Some of those schools must be built in the rural areas. We already talked with Comrade Maximo about this and I had not mentioned it earlier, but we are planning to form four minibrigades to build pre-university schools in the rural areas.

The capital city has many pre-university students. There are some of these schools that have 2,500 students enrolled. Do you think that a pre-university school with 2,500 students can operate properly? Do you think that one director or a group can handle such a school? Can this school be efficient? We have been thinking about the schools we need in the capital city and rural areas. For those students who would like to study in the rural areas—I am not talking about Pinar del Rio or Matanzas, I am talking about rural areas in Havana Province—we are planning to increase, by 500, the number of caballerias for the production of vegetables and tubers. These vegetables and tubers will be used to cover the needs of the capital city. We are already working on this. I asked the comrades to study how many schools could be built in an area of less than 40 caballerias; schools that could enroll approximately 500 students who could help fulfill our plans to increase the vegetable and tuber production for our capital city and to work in all the orchards we are planning to build. These orchards will run according to a plan; production will be decided according to our needs.

Well, the comrades told me we needed 36 schools because the comrades who were discharged from the Armed Forces needed this kind of a school for the course they usually receive after being discharged. In the capital city alone we have approximately 15,000 or 16,000 pre-university students. This is the only province that has this number of pre-university students, and we have very good pre-university schools. However, some of these schools have 700 students, and that is too many. The Che Guevara School, where Joanna Tablada—she impressed everyone with what she said—studies, has 700 students. I visited that school with a Soviet delegation and learned that there are 700 students in a school built for 500 students. So, I asked how many schools were needed and I was told that 36 more schools could be built throughout the new areas.

But there is something else that I have not mentioned and about which Maximo did not speak: we are going to form four minibrigades and each of these new minibrigades will build two schools a year. Therefore, the school problem will be resolved. But it will not be immediately. The pre-university students cannot help us build those schools. They will be working on the schools being built here. But in the city we are going to build lots of schools, we are not only going to repair schools. We are also going to build at least 36 pre-university schools in the rural areas. These new schools will be built on 6,500 hectares

of new land we have alloted for the production of vegetables and tubers for the capital city. Then we will find out if we still have something to envy from the days of the Rio Frio crooks. We will be doing all this in a revolutionary and socialist manner.

We have very big plans for the capital city, not only the ones we have talked about. What we have done has been proof that we can do what we want. I could even add that with this movement we have built our capacity to do what we want, when we want. You already know our limitations, but during this meeting we have learned what is being done to cover our construction material needs. We all know that this is the only thing that can stop us, not a lack of manpower, but a lack of construction material.

I had mentioned that we might need the help of the thousands of eastern province youths, but we might need their help not only to come and help build in Havana. The youths currently helping out at Antillana de Acero and other areas are only on loan. We even have youths from Pinar del Rio and Sancti Spiritus helping out in those areas.

In Siberia we have a joint project underway with the Soviets. Approximately 8,000 or 10,000 Cubans are going to work there. They are going to produce the lumber that our country needs for its construction and furniture. We are going to need our manpower, and the more manpower we have the greater will be our economic and social development. This will be possible if our plans are intelligent plans. The best thing of all this is that we are not sacrificing our economic development plans in the least. You have been able to see how we have taken tens of thousands of workers from the work centers. Those work centers, however, are producing more and better products. Each of the centers we talked about may have faced some problems because they did not get the raw material they needed or because they could not get something they needed, perhaps a spare part, but not because they did not have enough manpower. These big social development plans are not, in the least, sacrificing our country's economic development. Therefore, we must draft our plans properly to carry out our big economic and social development plans. We must understand that these two areas are very strongly linked.

Within socialism, there can be no economic development without social development. We cannot do as the capitalist system does. They build two huge nickel plants but only build homes for the administrator and 30 or 40 high ranking workers. In the meantime, the workers have to live in shacks. We cannot build the big 30,000-ton Punta Gorda and Camarioca plants without building houses for the thousands of workers. We cannot build the 80-million [figure as heard] square meter textile plant in Santiago de Cuba if we don't build thousands of homes. We are not capitalists and we cannot work like capitalists. We must combine social development with economic development. How can we have women involved in production if we don't have day-care centers, if our primary and secondary schools don't have dining rooms? During the recent inauguration of a secondary school I saw a 12-year-old girl who had to go home to warm up the food that the working mother had prepared the previous night. This is a 12-year-old girl, an adolescent, doing this. She was alone in the house.

We have fought for double sessions at all primary schools, and today most of the schools throughout the country have this system. We must now fight so that double sessions will be implemented in all secondary schools. The comrade from San Miguel del Padron was talking about how a school should be run, of the number of students in each classroom, and how and what kind of attention should be given to the individual student. We are already thinking about this.

We have very big development plans for the capital city and the country. In the next 2 years three important problems will have been resolved in the capital city. All the polyclinics we need will be completed, all the special schools we need will be repaired or built, and the day-care centers we need will also be completed. Once this is done we will have extra manpower. Like Maximo said, however, the plans for next year include building three pool complexes.

We are going to begin to build the installations we need for the Pan-American Games, whether we host the games or not, because what we build is for the people. These will be long lasting and useful installations for our people. We will carry out our plans even if tomorrow we were to learn that we would not be hosting the Pan-American Games. We are going to build the velodrome and all the other installations; we are going to build the multipurpose halls, etc., etc. We are going to build all this with, or without the Pan-American Games.

Next year we will begin with our school construction and repair plan. Our idea is to repair all the schools that need repairs and build new installations for those primary schools currently located in run-down buildings, schools that don't have proper lighting and ventilation, and schools located in old houses. We are going to build new schools, and only those primary schools that meet the standards will be not be touched. We are going to build schools in a rational manner.

We mentioned a meeting that the Ministry of Education held with primary school directors to get their impressions of the ideal primary school. We asked them: Comrades, you who have years of experience, what is an ideal primary school? Well, they said that the ideal primary school should not have too many students; that the students should not have to walk 1 and 1/2 or 2 km to get to school; that the school should be near the children's home so that they will not be forced to cross 10 or 12 streets or take buses. This would be a 450-student school; a school that can be handled properly—

something that does not happen with a 2,000 or 2,500 student school—a school that can be run by a good director; a school with double session; a school with a dining room for the children of the working women; and a school where, in the future, the student will be able to spend the whole day. In the meantime, we must resolve our most pressing problems.

A school with its sports installation would be the ideal school. We are already working on the ideal school program. The same will be done with the secondary schools. Some schools need repairs or new buildings. Lezcano mentioned approximately 350 schools. Perhaps it will be less. A census is currently being drawn up so that we will know how many primary and secondary schools have to be built. In 1989 we will begin our primary and secondary school plan. In 5 years, beginning in 1988—I think it will be 5 years—we must build 50 or 60 schools each year. This will be done in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993. By the end of 1993 the school network for the capital city will be completed.

The same will be done with the bakeries; there will be a whole network of bakeries. We have received samples of the bread for the diplomatic markets and the parallel markets. We are going to try and make these kinds of bread and pastries in all the bakeries. We are going to have approximately 100 bakeries; 80 to 90 percent of the people will be able to go to those bakeries and buy their fresh bread. We are going to improve the quality and variety of bread. In 1988, 1989, and 1990 the whole network of bakeries will be built. We will also have a complete network of stores; of family doctors. When will the family doctor network be completed? By 1992. By 1992 every resident of the capital city will have his family doctor.

As you heard today, we will soon have to start studying the idea of physiotherapy gyms. Perhaps it will be necessary to build more than 70 physiotherapy gyms. In the past when a person needed physiotherapy he had to go all the way to the Frank Pais Hospital in La Lisa. That person had to be taken there in an ambulance, rent a car, or use the bus. Just imagine a person with a real problem getting on a bus to go from Guanabaco to La Lisa or from Guanabaco to Boyeros, where the Julio Diaz Hospital is located. We will build those gyms. The first gym was built in order to find out how many of these gyms are necessary. We had to know whether one for each municipality is enough or if we have to build one in each polyclinic. From the way it looks, we will probably have to build a physiotherapy gym in every polyclinic. Well, then we are going to have to think about a physiotherapy gym program and a training program for nurses and specialists in this field.

We are also going to have to build a sports network, the pool complexes. Havana has one located in Lenin Park. But after we saw how 5,000 people used that complex on a Sunday, despite the distance, we decided that it would be nice if something like this could be built in areas more accessible to the people. Therefore, during a party meeting in El Cerro we suggest a test, not recreational but an instructive test. We suggested that buses should be assigned to take the primary school children to the pool, even if this pool is quite a distance from the schools. As a result of this test, thousands of children have already learned to swim. Now we are thinking of a complex in each municipality, and there may be a municipality that will have more than one such complex. Just think of Centro Habana, Diez de Octubre, and Cerro municipalities with one, two, or three pool complexes where the primary school children, during the school year, can go to exercise and learn to swim; pool complexes that the people in general could use for recreation purposes during the summer. We could have 20, 30, 40 such complexes, as many as we need.

The same goes for the sports installations. The report mentions another suggestion that was presented during the meeting in El Cerro. We talked about sports installations for all the students and the test was carried out in El Cerro municipality. It was a positive test and the experience is now being extended to other areas. The installations are simple ones, but in the future all our new schools will have a sports area. Municipalities like Centro Habana will have their sports area even if these have to be built on rooftops or basements, like the comrades at the Salvador Allende Hospital did. The Salvador Allende workers found that the roof was too low, so they dug to lower the floor. We will find enough space.

We will have enough houses, and wherever we find that it is necessary to demolish a whole block of old houses we will demolish it. Of course, we won't demolish the old houses in Havana Vieja. We will do as we did with the Miguel Enriquez Hospital. We needed three blocks and we got them; we later found out that we needed two extra blocks and we negotiated with the residents to get the land. The residents were happy. Had they lived in houses like the ones in Miramar we would have had some problems, but since many of them were living in old and uncomfortable houses they were willing to move. We will do the same wherever we find that we need the space to build a school, a pool complex, or sports installations.

We are also studying plans for a network of stores. We are studying the city layout to determine the number of markets, supermarkets, and stores the capital city needs. We will also have to better distribute our recreation centers. We will have to begin moving out of the downtown areas and build some of these centers in areas around the city. There were some families in Diez de Octubre municipality who were asking us for a restaurant; there are very few restaurants in that area. Most of the restaurants are located in La Rampa or the hotel areas. We have lots of things to do, but we will do them.

We are going to have to build a new water and sewer network. We will do it. We will have to make wider avenues; this not only saves time and prevents traffic jams, but it also saves money. I talked to you about the avenue that the Blas Roca contingent workers are building.

In the future we will also have to think about building the city's metro system. That is something I think will begin sometime in the nineties and will take a long time to build because it has to be done kilometer by kilometer. It is almost a lifelong task. We have great experience in digging tunnels. Our Armed Forces have much experience in this because they have had to dig this province from one end to the other. Therefore, they have much experience in this field. This is why we have asked the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces to organize and plan all the work prior to the construction so when the time comes to build the capital city's metro system they will be ready. We will have a new city.

Yesterday we were talking about what the social minibrigades could do. Yesterday we were saying we have to repair, rebuild, do major repair work on 30,000 houses a year. Does anyone here doubt we can do it if we have all the material we need? Does anyone doubt this after the excellent reports we have heard and the great news that hundreds of youths have joined the movement? We can always get 3,000 or 4,000 youths to help in work being done near their home; they can do this under the guidance of a worker who, until recently, did not know anything about construction and who, today, can teach our youth. These workers are doing excellent repair work with the help of the area residents. They are doing it not only with the help but also with the participation of the residents. The residents are making sure the material is not lost, that good quality work is being done. They are our strength. If you don't have that, no repair work would be done in the capital city. If you are going to sit down and wait for a super enterprise, with a super bureaucratic payroll, 2 million pieces of paper, and 50 different plans, to come in and do the work of remodeling the old building or painting a room—this will not happen. It is true we can build a great factory like Antillana de Acero, that we can build big hotel enterprises, that we can build big mining enterprises, and that we can build other enterprises; but, can we do this without the help of the people?

What will we have in the capital city—and I am mentioning the capital city because this is the example for the other provices—in the year 2000 if we continue to work the way we are working? What will we have if we continue to promote this construction movement of the masses, not only a construction movement of the masses but a rectifying movement of the masses; masses who are demanding work with better quality? What will our city be like? If we do things properly we will have 250,000 new houses and another 200,000 repaired houses; we will have approximately 500,000 livable houses. I hope that by then we will no longer find a single run-down neighborhood. I think they will disappear long before then. There are not many run-down neighborhoods, but there are still 50,000 people living there.

Yesterday, Comrade Glenda [not further identified] was telling us her excellent views of the work being done by the run-down neighborhood minibrigade workers. She told us that they are doing a great job and that their spirit is very high. We know our capital city has 70,000 shanties, 70,000 shanties. [repeats himself] There are tens of thousands who live in so called makeshift houses that have been declared uninhabitable, declared uninhabitable. [repeats himself] And they live in these makeshift houses because there are no shelters or because they refuse to go to a shelter. The situation is very sad and you cannot force these people to move from their makeshift houses. When were we going to overcome this problem? Do you think that with 3,800 houses a year we could resolve this problem? Where were we headed? What was going to happen? How were we going to resolve those problems?

It is very true the revolution has resolved many problems. It created jobs, built schools and polyclinics, trained doctors, built hospitals. In the interior of the country the revolution did many things—but why did it not resolve the housing problem and other serious problems? The services we already had were being affected; our education, health, and other programs were being affected as a result of the standstill we had reached. They were all affected by that swamp surrounding us.

We could have resolved the housing problem. The minibrigade formula was created 17 years ago. Had we kept up the movement, how far would we have gotten? Well, now we have recreated the movement. It is much stronger and better organized; it has been distributed by city and there are much better ideas behind the movement. However, that idea that was born 17 years ago and that resulted in the construction of thousands of buildings and had the movement continued throughout all these 12 years... [changes thought] This is why today we have to recover that lost time. We are no longer recovering only the time the country lost during the days of capitalism and neocolonialism, but also time lost during the days of socialism.

To those who are allergic to strong and worthy causes, to the proletarian spirit that, above all means a spirit of work and discipline; to those who are allergic and see the hives of this work spirit popping up, we say: We want to work hard not because we are workaholics, but because we must work hard, because we are a Third World country. We lost centuries because of colonialism; we lost almost 60 years because of neocolonialism; and we also lost a few years because of the revolution. We must recover lost time. You tell me: Are we going to be happy working? Are we going to be happy recovering lost time? Are we going to be happy working for this generation and for the new generations yet to come? Do we feel unhappy because of all the schools and day-care centers we have built? Do we feel unhappy because 330,000 residents of the capital city received their 8-hour bonus? Do we feel unhappy because a 76-year-old grandmother has contributed 600 hours of voluntary work in only a few months? We could ask that grandmother whether she feels happy or unhappy for what she did. We could also ask her whether she felt that she is healthier or less healthy for

doing that. [applause] Those petite bourgeoisie may be afraid and have their doubts, but our working people are afraid of nothing; our working people are not afraid of a little work; our working and revolutionary people are not afraid of hard work.

Our people are happy in face of the initial fruits of these efforts. Our assembly is happy in view of the initial fruits of this rectifying effort. We are not worried about the excess of work this effort could bring about; we worry about other things. We worry about not having enough materials to work with, about not having enough projects. We worry about not being able to incorporate more tens of thousands of people into this minibrigade movement; that we cannot commit hundreds or thousands of people to work in support of these minibrigades after hours or in work by students, housewives, local residents, or retired workers. We are not worried about having too much work, but we are sorry we cannot have more people doing this work which surges from the muscles, from the blood, and from a vigorous, healthy, and relatively young population. This, compared to the population of the developed capitalist countries, is a very young population.

What we have in abundance is energy. The risk we run is that we may not be able to employ all that energy we have. We run the risk of wasting this energy by exercising in a gym or some place else [applause] because we are not able to do that exercise with a pick and shovel, laying or carrying bricks, or pushing a wheelbarrow. That is the truth.

I recently toured five cities. I was able to evaluate the mood, the happiness, the state of mind of the residents—the happiness which is founded in the new hope; the excitement in the masses. Let no one think I confuse excitement with moods. I will not measure excitement by the number of times that people salute, or yell, or say Fidel, or repeat Fidel, Fidel. I am like Lezcano. When we stand there and the people applaud and repeat our names, we are put in an embarrassing, uncomfortable situation.

I evaluate excitement by the expressions on the faces of the people. It is not reflected in words but rather in the nuances in the way people exclaim, talk, salute, and react. I think a documentary has been made on that visit. I was able to observe a great excitement based on this whole spirit which has been created, a faith, a hope, an optimism, a total, absolute willingness to do things.

We are beginning to see the initial fruits of these efforts. That faith, determination, and willingness to move forward these programs with a new style of work must be increased. The party is a hell of a party, a party which in our capital alone has more than 100,000 members plus another 100,000 who are members of the Union of Young Communists [UJC].

Today we have what we did not have before the revolution or any other time: the strength of the party, the new style of work of the party, the impressive mobilization ability of the party through its municipal committees and small units, a party with a close and indestructible relation with mass organizations. Whatever is asked of the party, there is an immediate response, a quiet response. If, say in a week, 200 men with certain characteristics must be mobilized, the party gets in touch with the municipalities and, in a matter of days, the 200 men with the exact characteristics appear. If 1,000 men, with specific qualifications, characteristics, and even certain knowledge are requested, they will be mobilized in a matter of days. If 10,000 need to be mobilized, in a matter of days the 10,000 are mobilized; they mobilize quietly. You can't even hear them. But if you go places, you find such and such a contingent, the party, the UJC, the trade unions.

There is a new style, spirit, and attitude. We could say this is a revolution within a revolution. That is what we have been able to observe. This is what is felt here, impressive things have been seen during this very assembly. I think this is one of the best assemblies that has ever taken place. We have not discussed everything because we would have needed a week. However, we have discussed many important things; those which we have discussed, we have discussed in depth. We have become aware of our problems. You have the report. The report will be complemented by a number of ideas. That report should be a work plan for the party in the capital. We discussed the problems with much seriousness and depth, and the presentations were, in general, very serious. They have made a great impact on all of us.

It was especially moving when the representative for the handicapped spoke. It was moving to hear how the party in our capital, in a matter of weeks, responded to their requests and proposals presented in August. Those requests and proposals were answered in mid-August and the party created 14 workshops and employed more than 50 percent of the handicapped people. The representative explained there were approximately 500 handicapped people with labor problems. He brought the photo album. You can appreciate the atmosphere which prevails in that collective of men and women in wheelchairs who are participating in production in a workshop. That is much more important, more noble, and dignified than what was happening in our capital. Our capital city was slowly being invaded by the illegal street vendors and middlemen who were getting rich and at times even exploiting our handicapped. What a difference to have the party organize the workshops where the people feel like human beings, where they can feel useful to society, and feel they are participating in our country's development. That is what the party did in a few days.

The party in its new condition can do whatever it wants. It can make miracles, or things that seem like miracles, happen. Ah! How difficult the life of the party was 2 years ago; it could not do a single thing. For example,

when a woman would approach the party to complain that her house was crumbling—I would say there are 70,000 makeshift houses which are not only ugly but inconvenient, and the people who live in them are always fear they will fall on them—what would the party do? When the party was presented with this problem what would the party say? What tales and stories would the party make up? Patience, my son? Would it say that? Would it comfort the person by saying: Be patient; be patient. We have invented some miraculous and fabulous methods; we have invented some fantastic and incredible mechanisms. Yes, some day you will have all the houses you need. Yes, maybe in the year 3500. (?At the rate it's going) maybe some robots, if we had robots, would build the houses. How would the party explain? What if the individual said: But each time there are fewer houses. If we build fewer houses than the ones which deteriorate, when will we have houses?

In what manual, from which book? Because we had some brainy people, but they caused a lot of damage. They knew the exact pages, the exact phrases of what Lenin said on the exact date, year, page of the 40 volumes of Lenin's complete works. However, in none of those references could the party member find an explanation for the family who lived in a makeshift house, when in practice socialism has to find housing for that desperate mother; or find an explanation when that mother would say: My son has a certain allergy, my daughter has asthma, I suffer from this, there is no water; when a mother would say: I am paying 70 pesos to a lady for the care and feeding of my daughter, etc. I want a day-care center; or I want a better environment for my son because he has such and such a problem and I even have to leave him on the streets while I am at work. Secondary school adolescents in a single session who had nowhere to go were simply wandering around in the streets like stray dogs.

What kind of problem could the party resolve? What answer could the party give to the citizens who would present these types of problems? Which book, which reference? What could be said? The party had to work for years under these conditions. It had to work to see what mechanisms would work.

Now the party has an answer for all the citizens who come to ask for something. If it is a person from a make-shift building, we will organize the social minibrigade to do the work. And to the students, we can tell them to fix exactly what they want: fix the school. And the others, they can work in the school, in the day-care center, in the bakery, etc. The party has a concrete, clear, precise answer to each one of the problems. It has displayed an impressive effort. I would say the two things that stand out the most from this process are: the reaction of the people, and the impressive work of the party. I think it should be reason for healthy pride on our part to be able to count on such an instrument, such a force, such a party. With the authority it has among our workers and our people the party members have been setting an example.

What a wonderful word so full of meaning: exemplariness. It translates in the fact that the secretary of the main trade union in Antillana says he does volunteer work twice a week. It translates into the party members being the ones who take the first step in everything. For example, if during an afternoon I am looking for Comrade Lezcano, I find him at noon using a pick and shovel, or carrying sand at a social center fulfilling his 40 hours of voluntary work. [applause]

That force and that prestige is demonstrated in the more than 300,000 people who received the 8-hour bonus and among the hundreds of thousands who are still short a few hours and who are really sorry that they were not able to do their 40 hours. It also shows in the 13 million hours of voluntary work completed by the workers and residents of our capital. All that legitimate satisfaction and hope, all that healthy pride, has been reflected in this assembly without triumphalism, but with great optimism. We are happy because we see these are simply our first fruit, not so much for what we have done, but for what we are sure we are going to do; not so much for what we have built, but for what we are going to build; not so much for how we have improved, but for how much we are sure we are going to improve in the next years. [applause]

This new awareness, this spirit, was seen here with the participation of so many delegates, by the precision, seriousness, and depth of their thoughts. It was seen here when all the leaders of the contingents spoke, (Marco), (Filio), and the chief of the Blas Roca contingent. You saw this. They were concise, clear, and brief statements, and especially their answers—because a man can prepare a speech, a phrase, but no one can foresee a question. No one can prepare the answer to a question they have not heard. It was especially impressive for me when I said: It is possible we may have to work for a while; and they immediately answered: All the time that is necessary. It was an immediate response. In a few seconds another one said: We will do whatever is necessary. To each question there was an immediate, precise, clear response without doubt or hesitation. That is trust in the party; that is the proletarian spirit; [applause] that is the revolutionary spirit; that is man's trust in man, his ideas, and cause. That is the conviction that flows with increasing strength from this rectifying process; that we will keep our promises; that we will be able to accomplish what we determine to do. Fatherland or death, we will win. [applause]

Castro Addresses FEEM Delegates in Havana

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[Dialogue between Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz, president of the Councils of State and Ministers, with delegates to the seventh congress of the Federation of Mid-Level School Students (FEEM) held at the Palace of Conventions in Havana on 4, 5, and 6 December; delegates identified by caption—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Ana Iris Sanchez] First of all, we see that the students are being mobilized during months that [words indistinct]. As you can see, there is not much work to be done to keep the students active throughout their mobilization. The first problem we encountered was that a week after we were mobilized to the three rural centers there was no work for us to do. What is the real problem? Well, we are mobilized to pick coffee when there is none to be picked. As the comrade from the Ministry of Agriculture said, no plans are made for us to be given other things to do during that time when we are spending money and producing nothing.

[Castro] This is all due to that mental rigidity, that lack of common sense, which does not allow them to see that each situation is different. You cannot apply [words indistinct].

The other problem we discussed was the poor state of the camps. In the past the people who went to those camps were not given proper attention. Many people seem to have forgotten that the students must be given proper attention. The student needs to have electricity, running water, etc. A camp will never be a five star hotel, but it should have the basic comforts, and this is something the agricultural sector must provide. I sometimes wonder whether the agricultural sector thinks we are slaves. We don't cost them a single centavo; they take us to the rural areas and bring us back. I really feel it is important to give the student the proper attention. [Words indistinct] this is strictly an agricultural activity. We cannot ask the People's Government or the Ministry of Education to handle this.

[Delegate] The student's expenses are paid for by our work. The ministry has to pay for all this.

[Sashie Hernandez] The Ministry of Agriculture?

[Castro] The Ministry of Agriculture?

[Delegate] No, the Ministry of Education. We are under the Ministry of Education, and it is obligated to cover all our expenses. [passage omitted]

[Castro] What a way to pay for slave labor. [laughter] Oh, boy.

[Delegate] Commander, if we had work to do we would not be complaining. We know we can work to cover our expenses, but there is no work to be done. We are only sent to pick coffee and there is none to be picked.

[Castro] [Words indistinct] I have always told the capital city party comrades that we should not mobilize the people unless there is something specific for them to do, a well organized task for them to do. There is nothing worse than mobilizing a worker on Sunday, Saturday, or after hours if there not something useful for them to do. If there is nothing useful to be done, then they should not be mobilized.

If there is no rural school system, then it would be better to tell the students to stay at their school and study. This is much better than to mobilize a student for the sake of it. I was talking to Robaina [Roberto Robaina, first secretary of the Union of Young Communists] about the summer mobilization system. I told him that it would be nice to mobilize the university students during the summer. They are always doing intellectual work and it would be good to mobilize them once in a while, but only if there is something useful for them to do. The university student should not be mobilized for the sake of mobilization. Only the necessary number of students should be mobilized; not a single extra student should be mobilized. When summer comes we must remember those students who have spent the whole year studying and working in the rural areas. We must also remember that the urban students are mobilized for 40 days each year. They are not away for as long as the other students, however. All these factors must be kept in mind.

However, if a necessity should arise in the country, then we must face it. But that is something else. This would be only if there is a real need to mobilize them. But for the sake of mobilization, no. [passage omitted]

[Delegate] We have some comrades who have been discharged from the juvenile rehabilitation centers and who are sent to the vocational schools to go to the 9th grade and be trained to do something. The work we do at the shops is not really good. The students who are sent to work at the shops keep being sent to get a broom, sweep here and there; this is not the reason we were sent to those shops. After we leave those schools we are expected to practice what we have learned.

[Castro] I wonder whether this socialist state has overlooked the need to build more vocational schools. I wonder whether this could be done in the same way that all the day-care centers, polyclinics, family doctor homeoffices, special schools, secondary schools, rural preuniversity centers, and primary schools are being built. I believe we will always be needing these vocational schools. Right?

[Hernandez] Yes.

[Castro] We will always be needing those schools. [Words indistinct] and nourish that quarry of illegal activities, of common crimes. Are we just going to abandon these youths who could turn out to be very good workers?

[Delegate] I want to ask why a student who asks for a job at a factory is turned down. Why don't the workers want to give the students a job?

[Castro] Why are they turned down?

[Delegate] Why?

[Castro] Oh, you are asking me why they are rejected? [Passage indistinct] Wait, wait, I was thinking of something else. I was thinking about another solution.

I know there is an activity where we could employ all those youths. There is an area, the construction area, where everyone who wants to work can get a job. There are two problems we would have to resolve: first, the number of projects; and second, what to do with all the youths after they have been trained. I think that you, the youth, must wage this battle. This is the same problem we find in the shelters, in the jobs available at the shelters.

The FEEM comrades don't have an organization to handle these matters. The FEEM comrades are not professionals. They can help in the organization of a school and many other things, but they cannot resolve these problems. This is in your hands. Make up your list. Name the factories that refuse to give you a job and we will publish that list in GRANMA and all the other newspapers. We will write an article in the newspaper stating that those factories are acting like capitalists; they are not cooperating in the solution of this important problem; and the following is the list of names. [applause]

[Delegate] We want to talk about jobst at the work centers for the mid-level technicians once they have graduated. This worries our students. We are worried about the fact that we are studying a specific career, and once we graduate [words indistinct] we have to wait a long time, and we experience many problems before we can get a job. [passage omitted]

[Castro] That is not the only problem we see here. There is an evident contradiction. There is a certain youth boom [words indistinct] and on the other hand certain things are being done. The problem of the inflated payrolls is being [words indistinct]. We (?know) more jobs are needed and we must put our minds to work and find jobs for our youths. We have enough jobs in certain areas. For example, our teachers have no problems but our agricultural sector does. We don't have the same problems in every field, but we will have to study all the fields where we are experiencing problems and find out why we are having those problems. We could begin by creating a reserve of mid-level technicians. If these mid-level technicians have a narrow profile, then we could work on broadening their profile. We could have courses for them to take. We could use the same idea that we have used in the field of primary school education, the same system we used with our primary school teachers. This could help a bit. But that will be up to us, to the state. The state does the hiring. But this problem is all associated with the great boom; we not only have thousands of youths graduating as mid-level technicians but also thousands of youths who do not go on to the university. What are we going to do with all of them? The thousands of youths who do not go on to the university have a 12th grade education, and because they have a 12th grade education they are considered highly qualified workers. The problem is not only at your school; that problem is also experienced by tens of thousands of youths.

We could say we have a greater supply of qualified workers, with a high scholastic level, than a demand for these qualified workers. I don't think a socialist system can say it does not have a solution for this problem. Socialism means production and distribution. We have to do something with all those youths for whom we don't have a job at this moment. The state has a sacred duty, and I will not hesitate to add that it must do something to resolve the problem of our youths.

However, achieving an exact balance between the number of students and jobs available is not easy. We would need a very good computer for something like this. The estimates keep changing. I don't know what method was used to calculate the number of economists and business administrators we needed, but it was not a good method. We have too many of them. We were having a problem because we did not know what to do with all those youths. I said that the best thing would have been [words indistinct] than having them out on the streets. In the meantime, giving them a 12th grade education seemed the best solution. During the capitalist days, that youth would have been out on the streets. If that youth has a 12th grade education then we have a youth with a 12th grade education. I have seen many of those youths at the factories and, in general, they look happy. They may not be working in their field, but they have adapted to their new job. Every society should be flexible enough to adapt a prepared youth to another job. New problems and needs are born every day.

The narrow profile creates a problem because it is more difficult to adapt to another job. The broader the profile is, the more flexibility you are allowed to give a person this or that task. If the profile is narrow he can only be given one tasks; thus, it is much more difficult to find a job for that person. It would not be a wise move to inflate our payrolls. We must find a solution to the problem. We cannot just say wait until you get lucky and get a job; or look for a cousin and see if he can find you a job. No, we have already established the hiring requirements. To hire a person the party, the administration, the union, and our youths must approve. I don't think that [words indistinct] cousin of a comrade of yours cannot decide who is going to be hired. If he did this the party would intervene and ask why that person was given the job. Is it because he is your cousin? Isn't there someone else who could be hired? We are putting a stop to all those tricks.

But we are not only talking about the economists and the youths who have graduated from the polytechnical institutes, we are also talking about the youths who complete their 12th grade and who do not wish to go on to the university and who are looking for a job. The first thing that we must do is try and prepare them to fill those jobs

in the areas where they are needed the most. Once we have trained that youth in any field we cannot just abandon him. No, we cannot. We must accept our responsibility and find a job for every youth who has completed our education system. We cannot operate as the capitalist system does. The capitalist system just leaves them on their own to see whether they can get a job. The state could very well create a fund. The state will not suggest that a youth become a street vendor and go out to sell bracelets. No. I think this is a problem for the state, for the party. When I speak of the state, I say that it is a responsibility [words indistinct].

[Mayra Lavigne] Recently we had an experience with economists in Havana. We offered them jobs in Playa municipality. Of the 500 economists to whom we offered a job, 300 accepted [words indistinct]. Comrade Fernandez [not further identified] has stated that the organizations are asking for qualified workers. [Words indistinct] with the Ministry of Basic Industry we drafted a plan to introduce engineers into the production sector. But after 3 or 4 years the ministry finds itself facing a problem. It has already trained all those engineers and it wants to keep them as administrators, but there is an administrator, a person who actually trained the engineers. This is a person who is an excellent worker but who is not as qualified as the engineer. Therefore, the ministry suggested that this person, who worked for so many years and who taught the young graduate, be appointed as instructor for all the engineers sent to work for the ministry. [passage omitted]

[Castro] I think we need to expand this system but without inflating our payrolls. The idea is for everyone to have a job. We could retire some of them. Let me ask you a question. What was your job offer for 1987?

[Lavigne] Commander, according to the economy plan...

[Castro, interrupting] Job offer, not employment.

[Lavigne] What I would like to say is that for the first time in the history of the revolution, in the past 5 months our hiring index has decreased.

[Castro] What?

[Lavigne] Our hiring index has decreased because we have not filled the positions left vacant and because we are decreasing our number of temporary workers.

[Castro] Mayra, how was the problem resolved in the past? By inflating, inflating, and inflating the payrolls?

[Lavigne] Yes, by inflating our payrolls.

[Castro] I wonder how many youths who have reached the working age are without a job. That is another problem. I was talking about students [words indistinct] about jobs for students. There are others who did not study or go to vocational school who may also be looking for a job. That is something else. Perhaps you could give us that information tomorrow.

[Lavigne] This 5-year period, 1986-1990, will report the highest number of available workers. The next 5-year periods, 1991-1995 and 1996-2000, will reduce the number of jobs available.

[Castro] Since this is a problem we are very interested in, why don't you read each statement a little slower. One.

[Lavigne] In the provinces where there are not enough workers, and we have concentrated our attention on the eastern provinces...

[Castro, interrupting] Yes, we have already talked about the fact that in the eastern provinces the minibrigades won't be as strong as in Havana and that we will have to recruit youths to work there. Continue.

[Lavigne] Further the workers' education through courses, training, and education.

[Castro] Further?

[Lavigne] Further the education of the people.

[Castro] Yes.

[Lavigne] Further educate the people even if they already have completed their education and give those who did not study the opportunity to attend the courses and further their education.

[Castro] Right. Three?

[Lavigne] Create a reserve of qualified workers; this measure will allow us to absorb the number of recently graduated youths.

[Castro] The truth is that our solution to the employment problem will be very important for our students. What are we going to tell those students, the mid-level school students, pre-university students, mid-level technicians, vocational school students, qualified workers, etc., who are here today? What are we going to tell them? Study, excel, do your best to further your education, but we can't guarantee you a job? That is the key the problem. It is a political problem; it is even an ideological problem; it is also a problem of [words indistinct]. We have to guarantee them a job. [passage omitted]

[Gisela de la Cruz] Commander, what do you think about a university entrance examination? What has your experience been? We would like to know your opinion.

[Castro] Someone asked me for an opinion. [Passage indistinct] I also agree with the comrade who said that this should be discussed with the other students. Of course, this won't be easy. Everyone will have a different

opinion. The pure science students prefer the examination; they don't like the idea of a student being accepted strictly on the basis of his or her file. I know of cases where a file speaks highly of the student. We talked much about this because something had to be done. After much thought we reached a conclusion. I think it has already been suggested, and if you wish you may discuss it; after all, you are representing the students. However, if you prefer individual discussions, that is also fine with me.

Well, we decided that in the beginning an entrance examination would not be required for all the careers. I felt that the examination was not necessary for the field of medicine; I felt that it was necessary for the students who wished to be teachers. However, we did decide to try this new examination method, let's call it a new system, [words indistinct]. We feel it is possible to achieve an adequate balance. We studied this matter in depth and we came up with a system based on the two things: the student's file, and the examination. We feel the file system cannot be abolished. That file system is what makes many students work and study harder. If we were to base the entrance strictly on an examination we would find many students saying that the system is not good. You will find many students who will say: It will be the same if I pass with 65 points or 85 points; I am a brain; I will only study during the last year and pass the test. Others will say they don't get nervous when taking a test—the test has its pros and cons, some students don't get nervous while others do—so we decided that the file was necessary. However, the examinations are not all the same. Any system implemented is only temporary. As soon as we have the information we need, we may change the system, or keep it. But we wanted the examination to be a bit harder. We did not want an examination like the one taken in secondary school when applying for entrance to the pure science school. That examination is only 50 percent of the grade. We feel that the students with the greatest possibilities of being accepted at the university are those who are disciplined in their studies, those with a vocation. We are planning to implement the system this year, 1988-1989. This system will not be applied to the students interested in a medical career, a career in education, or for foreign students. Those are our ideas regarding this matter. I think your views expressed here agree with our ideas, and I also think this should be discussed in depth with the other students.

I want to tell you that for us, for me, and for the other comrades, it has truly been a privilege to have participated in this congress. Few times in the life of leaders, of politicians, perhaps in few countries, can one have this privilege of participating in a congress of such quality with our youth, that is, with our students, the youngest of our youth, the mid-level school students. The pioneers are growing up, preparing themselves for youth. You, the members of the FEEM, are already there.

Few times, and nowhere else, has an excellent collective such as this gathered together. [clears throat] This is evidence of what our youth is. They have met not just to shout slogans. They have chanted slogans, they have spoken, they have shouted, they have exclaimed. They were hoarse even before coming here. That was one of the problems we had. Next time we are going to fix a ton of honey and lemon juice [laughter] for when the next FEEM congress is held.

But this is also the result of your enthusiasm and good cheer. It is a privilege, above all, to meet with the representatives of a youth such as this, of a student body such as ours. Just because we are used to the idea that we have an excellent youth and an excellent student body, from the patriotic and revolutionary point of view, doesn't mean that we are not impressed when we have such a direct contact.

Basically, we have spent our time working. We have worked together. I believe that our work has been highly productive. The results of the congress work will be in evidence soon. It has been highly productive because I feel that, in one way or another, we can help you resolve your problems.

We have become aware of serious problems and we cannot [words indistinct]. I think this is a problem experienced by everyone, not only here in our country. I feel that perhaps here in our country we study more than in other countries. I know that our students have a very good political education. This does not mean we do not have our problems; we know we have problems. We are not studying our own country's history. This is one of the problems we are trying to resolve with our rectification process; it is important, very important for our students to learn world history and national history. They must study our roots. If we have no roots we are like leaves being blown by the wind; therefore, we must feel linked to our history and our culture.

We must study our [words indistinct]. Therefore, the idea of dedicating ourselves to study is very important. Later we will have to dedicate ourselves to our work. We must dedicate ourselves to study and expand our knowledge, our culture in general. This does not only enrich our life and spirit but it also helps the overall development of man; it helps the overall development of the Cuban man, of the socialist society which paves the way to communism. We must not renounce this idea; our new generations must never renounce the idea of struggling and working for a new communist society. [Words indistinct] the hope that our youth will continue with the idea and purpose of building a communist society because a communist society can help us achieve our high goals. You must make sure that our ideals are never weakened; you must struggle to make sure those goals are never set aside; you must always be aware of all those things that could weaken the possibilities to achieve our goals.

You have talked about career orientation. We have seen that this is not easy and that more thought must be given to this matter. We also talked about [words indistinct] entrance examinations and how to resolve this problem. We must look for new formulas, but above all we must keep our principles [words indistinct]. What would give us the right to criticize the street vendors or struggle against the business-minded people if [words indistinct]. We will not abandon our youths. I know that you agree with us that this is not possible in a socialist society; it would be in contradiction with the spirit with which hundreds of thousands of our students study, work, and participate in our country's development and production.

You could ask yourselves why so (?much talk about development). What am I going to get out of that development? [Words indistinct] contribute to the country's development not only with my education but with my work. The student could ask himself what does this country, which I am willing to defend with my own blood, have to offer me. The country cannot abandon a student after he finishes 9th grade; the country cannot abandon a student after he finishes 12th grade. No, the country must help prepare that student because not everyone will be able to go on to the university. That student can be trained as a qualified worker or as a mid-level technician. We must change the students' idea that there is a difference between being a mid-level technician and a qualified worker. We must make our youths realize that being a mid-level technician does not mean that the person performs only intellectually-oriented work.

I think that the revolutionary state must assume its responsibility and put that force to work. We have the experience; we are using it in other activities. Then why can't we [words indistinct]. Why can't we create a central administration to handle this reserve force? This central administration could approach the Ministry of Domestic Trade and tell them: We have this number of accountants in Pinar del Rio, Matanzas, and Villa Clara. What is your situation there? What kind of control and administration problems are you having in that area? They can also approach the People's Government—the stores are handled by the People's Government but the ministry handles the overall work, and I don't know what else—and ask them what their needs are in Matanzas, here or there. It must be a program supervised by the State Committee for Labor and Social Security and it must work in accord with the situation experienced by the individual organizations, according to the profiles available.

Solutions to the problem must be found because we cannot have the youths just waiting around while we find those solutions. No, we will solve their problems first; we will give them a job. That is what we are going to do; these are the ideas I will present before the party and the government. I consider it my duty to find a solution to this problem. If a solution to this problem results from this congress, then I think this congress will be called, without exaggerating, a historic congress. [applause] [passage omitted]

Seminar on Palestinian Question Continues

FL171646 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] The participants of the seminar for Latin America on the Palestinian question, being held at Havana's Palace of Conventions, have sent a strong note to the UN Security Council protesting Israel's attack on Libya. The delegates sent another message to Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee, expressing their militant solidarity.

The aggressive nature of the Tel Aviv regime was noted in the first session of the three working groups. The delegates met last night at the Cuban Institute of Friendship With the Peoples, ICAP. The seminar will end today with the approval of the main report.

Brazilian Governor Orestes Quercia Departs

FL181901 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1502 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Sao Paulo Governor Orestes Quercia returned to Brazil after a 5-day visit to Cuba. Just before his departure Quercia said in Havana that Cuba's progress in public health is exceptional and exemplary. He added the Cuban Government and people's effort in the construction projects for the health sector is very important. The Brazilian governor said his meetings with our commander in chief, Fidel Castro, allowed him to see the various aspects and points of view on which they agree with regard to Latin American unity.

As part of his activities during his stay in Cuba, Quercia signed a letter of intent. This document was also signed by Pedro Chavez, provincial chairman of the People's Government National Assembly, where it is established that the cooperation between the two countries will develop in several fields.

Grenada

Gairy Party Expels 'Power Hungry' Minister

FL220052 Bridgetown CANA in English 2251 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Excerpts] St George's, Grenada, Dec 21, CANA—The opposition Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) headed by Former Prime Minister Eric Gairy has expelled ex-Education Minister Dr Wellington Friday. Sir Eric in a letter sent to Friday over the weekend informed him about the expulsion because of matters relating to his conduct. The letter accused Friday, who served as a minister in 1977-79 before Gairy was toppled in a leftist coup, of being power hungry.

It said the general membership of the party had begun to cast "negative remarks" about the former minister on the grounds that he could not be trusted.

"In fact we believe that we have lost some numerical support because of your presence within our party", Sir Eric told Friday. [passage omitted]

When contacted by CANA, Friday put down his expulsion to the fact that he was the only one on the executive who had been seriously questioning the ex-prime minister's method and approach to doing things.

"...Although he (Gairy) himself had been accusing other members of the executive of not speaking up and was always complimenting me for standing up, I think that he regarded that in a very negative way", Friday said.

Haiti

Soldiers Fire on Crowd; 1 Killed, 4 Wounded

FL221142 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 22 Dec 87

[Text] There has been more violence in Haiti, this time in the capital, Port-au-Prince, where soldiers opened fire on a crowd killing one person and wounding four. This incident followed a memorial service in Port-au-Prince for those killed in last month's election violence.

Two soldiers were reportedly firing for no apparent reason. The Armed Forces has not commented on the incident.

St Vincent and the Grenadines

Mitchell Explains Position on Haiti

FL180013 Bridgetown CANA in English 2054 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Kingstown, St Vincent, Dec 17, CANA—St Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister James Mitchell has dismissed reports that he and four other Caribbean leaders were lending support to Haiti's military government led by Lieutenant-General Henri Namphy. Mitchell said the leaders' main concern was to ensure democracy for Haiti and that none of them was prepared to put their reputation on the line by giving support to General Namphy to maintain military power in the country.

Prime Ministers Mitchell, Edward Seaga of Jamaica, John Compton of St Lucia, Henry Eman of Aruba and Dom Martina of the Netherlands Antilles visited Port-au-Prince briefly last week for talks with Namphy.

Prime Minister Mitchell told a news conference here that he and his colleagues emphasized the need for the electoral process in Haiti to be totally democratic and concentrated their attention on the quality of new elections planned for January 17 next year. Mitchell said that the New Haitian Constitution provided for an elections council to be appointed by nine organisations including the government.

He said they were told by President Namphy that four organisations had up to then submitted names to the council and that his government had not yet named its member. Mitchell said although the Constitution made provision for the government to appoint members to fill any vacancy, they pointed out to the Haitian Government that there was a fundamental difference between what the Constitution stated and how the people of Haiti, the rest of the Caribbean and the world at large would perceive the election if the electoral council was substantially appointed by the military government.

The Vincentian leader said that they therefore strongly urged Namphy to ensure that at least five out of the nine were appointed by the organisations, and that if they continued to refuse to make the appointment, the government could at least consult with the candidates on the appointment of the other four or get the organisations participating in the election to suggest the name of a fifth member. Mitchell said in this way it would be clear that the majority of members of the electoral council did not originate from the government itself.

He said the Haitian Government delegation gave the leaders the impression they would be prepared to look favourably at the suggestion and their reaction was expected by Monday. Mitchell told the news conference he was satisfied that the military government was dedicated to holding the elections and to establish democracy in Haiti.

He felt Lieutenant-General Namphy was anxious to go down in history as the one responsible for returning Haiti to democracy and made the point during the discussions that it was the electoral council and not the government who had cancelled the elections. Mitchell said the delegation urged the government to give military protection to the candidates, the ballot boxes and the polling stations, as well as to help maintain law and order so that the wishes of the people could be upheld.

He believed one of the reasons for the elections violence was the failure of the military to make its presence felt in so far as maintaining law and order and protection of the people were concerned.

I think too that part of the problem is that they (the Army) have no experience of elections. I would say they don't even really realize that it is their job in that situation to have protected all the polling stations and deployed the military all around, Mitchell added. He said it appeared that the military assumed that the electoral council could handle the elections and that there did not seem to be proper dialogue between the council and the military government.

Mitchell said the result was that the government just left the council to conduct the elections by themselves and that anarchy took over.

Responding to charges that the leaders, having not met with any of the organisation in the elections, appeared to be lending support to Lieutenant-General Namphy's military government, Mitchell said it was not possible to meet with the 35 opposition candidates given the time frame and existing situation in Haiti at the time of their visit.

Mitchell said the leaders did not go to Haiti without recognising their responsibilities to try to get the country back to democracy.

We are not going to put our reputations on the line to uphold a dictatorship and I think our own credibility would be at stake if we did anything to the contrary.

Mitchell pledged his continued support for the process of democracy to take place in Haiti saying each of the leaders wanted the best results for the people.

Komplektov Speaks to Press, Leaves for Cuba
FL220038 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish
0445 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Mexico City, 17 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor G. Komplektov has said his country and the United States have to come out jointly in support of the Esquipulas II agreements in order to achieve peace in Central America. Speaking at a news conference before leaving for Havana, Komplektov stated there is no reason for the two superpowers not to issue a joint statement of support for the Central American peace process.

After emphasizing the Nicaraguan contras had not emerged because of his country's backing for the Sandinist government, Komplektov asserted the Soviet Union has done nothing to hamper the peace process in the region.

He noted Mexico's participation in the Group of Six and in Contadora, as well as its statements in forums and meetings such as that of the eight Latin American leaders in Acapulco and in favor of world peace and nuclear disarmament. In this connection, he said the Soviet Union wishes to share views and considerations on the recent summit meeting between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, inasmuch as its results affect everyone's interests. He stressed that after the agreement to eliminate short- and medium-range missiles it is necessary to ban chemical weapons and other kinds of nuclear arms.

Democratic Union Nominates Cardenas
PA211952 Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish
12 Dec 87 p 7

[Article by Ruben Arizmendi; quotation marks as published]

[Excerpts] The national political association Democratic Unity [UD] yesterday acclaimed Cuauhtemoc Cardenas Solorzano as its presidential candidate. So far, PARM [Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution], the PFCRN [not further identified], the Democratic Current, the Green Party, the People's Defense Committee, and the Social Democratic Party are supporting him.

In his speech Cardenas Solorzano pointed out that the struggle for in-depth nationalist and democratic transformations is under way.

Regarding the political agreement signed by UD leader Evaristo Perez Arreola and Democratic Current coordinator Porfirio Munoz Ledo with the participation of leaders and representatives of the aforementioned parties and organizations, the candidate said these forces have decided to change the present situation so the country and its sovereignty will cease being betrayed, and to prevent channels of expression and democratic participation from being closed, because this may cause the people to lose their income and wealth. [passage omitted]

Before Cuauhtemoc Cardenas delivered his speech, UD secretary General Arturo Martinez Nateras said there is still time for the PMS [Mexican Socialist Party] and the PRT [Revolutionary Workers Party] to reconsider their positions, help strengthen democracy in the country, rescue the revolutionary constitutional plan, and reconstruct the country; otherwise, he said, "they would be divorcing themselves from the national interests, and would be favoring continuity and unpopular PRI policies.

Martinez Nateras added that only by legally joining our forces will we increase the possibilities for our individual members to achieve the nomination of a candidate to the presidency and to be represented by 500 deputies in the Federal Chamber of Deputies, 64 in the Senate, and each with their respective alternates. Only if we unite will we be able to designate 120,000 observers covering all ballot boxes and a number of party and candidate representatives, he said.

We still have time and we ask the political parties to support Cuauhtemoc Cardenas' nomination, immediately initiate talks, and adopt measures so the democratic coalition that will rescue the country may be legally formed no later than a week before the registration of candidates."

Martinez Nateras said the technocracy and continuity promoted by the government candidate and the "diabolical" and right-wing "Pinochet supporters [pinochetista]" promoted by the Manuel J. Clouthier-led Neo-PAN [National Action Party] will be defeated so we may work together for the construction of a democratic country. [passage omitted]

Nuevo Leon Secretary General Resigns
FL220227 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish
0528 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Monterrey, Mexico 16 Dec (NOTIMEX)—Lucas de la Garza, secretary general for government of Nuevo Leon State, resigned today from his post. Natividad Gonzalez Paras, present state PRI leader, took De la Garza's place.

Governor Jorge Trevino Martinez accepted Lucas de la Garza's irrevocable resignation. He also said he would swear in Gonzalez Paras as new secretary general for government when he returns from Mexico City, where he is to meet with President de la Madrid.

In the meantime, the PRI National Executive Committee named Hernando Castillo Guerra as provisional PRI leader in Nuevo Leon to replace Gonzalez Paras.

El Salvador

Ungo Rules Out Unilateral Holiday Cease-Fire

PA220211 Paris AFP in Spanish 0116 GMT 22 Dec 87

[Text] San Salvador, 21 Dec (AFP)—The Salvadoran guerrillas will "not declare a unilateral cease-fire" in the face of increasing counterinsurgency actions by the Salvadoran Army, FDR President Guillermo Ungo declared today.

In a brief telephone statement to AFP, Ungo said from Panama City that "the people will not have a Christmas truce" due to President Napoleon Duarte's "refusal to heed an appeal made by San Salvador Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas."

The archbishop said on 13 December, in making a public appeal to the Army and the guerrillas, that "the people expect a truce to celebrate the holidays marking the birth of Christ in peace and without mourning." Nevertheless, in rejecting the Christmas truce President Duarte said on 18 December that "this type of cease-fire brings no benefits."

Ungo said that "the Army has launched military operations during the past several days. A unilateral cessation of hostilities is therefore senseless at this time." He warned that "a large military offensive makes a truce impossible."

General Adolfo Blandon, chief of the Armed Forces Joint General Staff, said recently that the government's troops were ordered to intensify actions throughout the country during the holiday season to counteract a guerrilla "campaign" to intimidate politicians and high-ranking military officials.

Duarte Says ANEP Plotting Coup Against Him

PA200051 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Excerpt] President Jose Napoleon Duarte today said in Morazan that the National Association of Private Enterprise, ANEP, is plotting a coup against him with the excuse of the second stage of the agrarian reform.

Yesterday, the minister for livestock and agriculture, on rebutting ANEP's arguments against the two new agrarian laws passed by the legislative branch, hinted that the businessmen's leaders are seeking to destabilize the government with their opposition. This morning, President Duarte, after visiting San Francisco Gotera in Morazan, confirmed that ANEP has always been plotting against him by using the agrarian reform as a springboard.

[Begin recording] [Duarte] This is what they have been plotting. They have devoted great efforts to destabilizing the country. [Words indistinct] ANEP is trying to destabilize the country and the farmers' federation. The latter have made some logical remarks, some common sense criticisms. [Name indistinct] sent a letter to me in the name of the association, a letter I gladly considered.

[Reporter] Then what does the government intend to do?

[Duarte] I have asked the Assembly to consider the law. The Assembly is doing just that. It has designated a commission formed by three lawyers to correct any mistakes.

[Reporter] Do you think a coup is truly likely, Mr President?

[Duarte] No, these are only rumors. That sector is used to giving orders and trying to impose its will. They are always plotting to topple the government through a coup, but it will not work for them. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Gen Blandon Comments on FDR-FMLN 'Plan M'

PA200013 San Salvador PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 19 Dec 87 p 5

[Text] A dreadful subversive plan that includes political murders, large scale criminal attacks, and terrorist sabotage has been disclosed, General Adolfo O. Blandon reported yesterday.

Interviewed by the media yesterday Gen Blandon, chairman of the Armed Forces Joint Chiefs of Staff, said he will call for a news conference in the next few days to reveal in detail the content of "Plan M," recently seized by the Army from FLMN-FDR terrorist groups in several parts in the country.

Gen Blandon added that the plan, which is being studied in detail, includes important political murders of top Armed Forces and government officials. He did not rule out the possibility that labor leaders and university authorities would be attacked, and the government and the "death squads," etc., would be blamed for such attacks.

Blandon pointed out that the terrorist organizations' leaders and the front groups that such terrorist organizations have in San Salvador among labor and student movements seek to create serious confusion, which could be used by the FDR-FMLN to provoke disturbances that would lead to disastrous situations. As long as they disturb the public order, these groups have no concern for the lives of children, the elderly, or other innocent people who could die as a consequence of their actions, Blandon said.

Blandon emphasized that the criminal plan contains some aspects that are being studied in detail by military intelligence to try to discover information that could serve as warnings and could help prevent further actions and maybe even some crimes.

Blandon harshly condemned this "new escalation of violence ordered by the FDR-FMLN," which concides with statements by President Jose Napoleon Duarte during the military school graduation ceremony in which 149 cadets received their commission. Duarte emphatically stated that trying to hold a dialogue with subversive groups had been one of the worst steps he had taken during this year.

Blandon insisted that "Plan M" is one of the most dreadful plans designed by the terrorist groups' leadership. Unfortunately, he added, some details are missing, which will make it more difficult to adopt absolutely secure measures to prevent the subversives from carrying out their plans.

Gen Blandon did not want to comment on whether some of the crimes that have been perpetrated, such as the killing of the nongovernmental [as published] Human Rights Commission president in San Miguel and the killing yesterday of one of the ANTEL [National Communication for Telecommunications] union's leaders, plus other crimes that have been committed, are part of this new escalation of violence, but he did not rule out that possibility.

Finally, Gen Blandon insisted that many of the issues not discussed yesterday will be further explained in a news conference he will hold in the next few days.

Guatemala

Intelligence, Security Services Reorganized

PA211520 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2131 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Guatemala City, 10 Dec (ACAN-EFE)—The Guatemalan Army has reorganized its intelligence and presidential security services because of the increase in common crime and because of some incidents in which Armed Forces officials have been involved.

A "confidential" military report disclosed today in Guatemala City states that the Armed Forces have analyzed the human rights situation in Guatemala, "seeking to strengthen human rights."

The document, which contains an evaluation of the population's behavior and the general crime indexes, states that "the Army's ranks have been purged" and that 23 officers, 51 specialists, and 11 military commissioners have been sent to the tribunals.

The report adds that some changes have been made at the Army Intelligence Directorate (G-2), which is now called the Intelligence Department (D-2), as part of the state security agencies reorganization.

The fearsome Presidency secret police, known as "the Files," have been improved in the technical field. In addition, some police corps have been converted into unarmed riot squads.

Nicaragua

Ortega on Contra Aid Vote, Talks, Offensive

PA220102 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1919 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Speech by President Daniel Ortega at the closing ceremony of the National Assembly in Managua on 21 December—recorded]

[Text] Good morning, dear representatives. The report presented by Commander Carlos Nunez, president of this Assembly, summarizes the efforts made to strengthen our nation's institutionalization. I must emphasize that the promulgation of the Constitution was our most important event. The Constitution is the fruit of the working people, the fruit of the Nicaraguan people's pluralist philosophy. It was hammered out in the midst of a war, in the midst of grief and a constant struggle for peace.

This period of National Assembly sessions is closing just when the U.S. Congress is about to approve more aid for the mercenary forces. We must clearly define two diametrically opposed attitudes. On the one hand is the attitude of the Central American presidents who are working for peace, who signed the Guatemala agreement on 7 August. On the one hand is the attitude of the Central American parliaments, which have supported and are supporting this peace effort, and epecially the efforts of the Nicaraguan National Assembly.

In the report presented by the Assembly's president, the Nicaraguan people's unwavering desire for peace is clearly expressed. The Assembly has not argued in favor of war; there have been no debates in favor of an arms buildup or against the Guatemala agreement. All of the resolutions debated at the Assembly—most of which have been approved while others have been rejected—promote peace and the country's political, social, and economic stability.

However, on the other hand, the U.S. Congress—pressured and blackmailed by the U.S. Administration, by the U.S. President—was forced to spend the weekend in lengthy debates to approve more aid for the U.S. Government's mercenaries, who sow terror in our fatherland. Congress has been debating, and it seems as if an agreement has been reached, an agreement for $8.1 million or $8.6 million—it could be more or less.

The fact is that the conditions and limitations Congress tried to impose on this new budget for death have been rejected by the U.S. President. On Saturday the special commission, comprised of approximately 25 representatives from the Senate and House of Representatives—

the two bodies waiting to ratify or amend this proposal—worked until 2300. On Sunday they also worked very late, and since they felt pressured by the prospect of a presidential veto that would leave them without a budget they were forced to approve a 1-day spending bill so the country could continue functioning on Monday, so that the country would not be paralyzed on Monday.

The U.S. President's stubbornness and mental disorder are such that he has placed the nation's budget at stake, he has risked the paralysis of his country to blackmail the U.S. Congress and to succeed in his intention to continue financing what has been described as humanitarian aid in one part of the resolution and as a starting point for the transfer of weapons under certain conditions in another part, provisions which, while they do not fulfill all of the U.S. President's demands, establish and ratify a policy of terror and death against the Nicaraguan people.

Today in Santo Domingo a new round of indirect talks will begin for the negotiation of a cease-fire. Nicaragua has made a very clear proposal in this regard. Our proposal is in accordance with the spirit of the Esquipulas agreements. The Nicaraguan proposal gives the armed groups—the U.S. Government mercenaries—the option of becoming civic opposition groups. This is our commitment, and it is in accordance with the Esquipulas agreements.

We are complying with the agreement and we are not asking the mercenaries to surrender, because surrender means something else. Surrender means the government would decide what to do with the mercenaries: whether to execute, try, or jail them. That is what a surrender means.

Our proposal does not include the possibility of a surrender. It is made to give those individuals who are involved in the armed conflict, acting as tools of the U.S. Administration, to cease being tools and to become instead part of the civic political opposition existing in our country.

Today is the beginning of a new round of cease-fire talks. Nicaragua has invited certain figures who have shown an interest in Central American problems to participate, to contribute to an effective cease-fire agreement. Nicaragua is not bringing in paid technical advisers.

Our technical commission is headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Tinoco. Nicaragua has simply invited political figures such as Mr Wischnewski; Mr Fischer, a specialist from Harvard University in law and security matters and the cease-fire; and Mr Paul Richler.

We do not have many illusions that any significant progress will be made at today's and tomorrow's meetings. Negotiations are always complex; the important thing, however, is that we are meeting and working together.

We know that the Reagan administration's intention is to boycott the meetings so no results can be achieved and so it can then blame Nicaragua. The U.S. Administration is blackmailing Congress into giving the funds, it is trying to boycott the talks, and, at the same time, it continues terrorist actions in our fatherland.

Yesterday morning they launched another attack against the civilian population, against a cooperative located 10 km from the Rama River. There President Reagan, through the mercenaires, delivered five bodies of Nicaraguan children as a Christmas gift.

As a Christmas present for the working people, a terrorist attack with clear propaganda aims has been launched against the mines of Siuna, Bonanza, and Rosita. The terrorists met with strong resistance from the Nicaraguan workers, who immediately took up arms and confronted the mercenaries. Already last night our forces were in pursuit of the terrorists. They were repelled from Siuna and Rosita. The fight was still going on today where our Army troops were fighting a few kilometers away from Bonanza to expel the mercenaries.

The mercenaries have concentrated themselves in Honduran territory, a few kilometers away from Nicaragua, near the Atlantic region, and that is why the attack came from that direction.

We cannot forget about the war now that we are celebrating the Christmas and New Year season. We cannot fail to speak about the war. We do not in the least want to jar the Nicaraguan people with the word war. But that is the reality. We wage a war provoked by the U.S. Government. All of we Nicaraguans are forced to wage war in the military, political, and economic fields. This is why national unity is a fundamental factor. By national unity we do not mean a mixture of Reagan and Sandino. That is impossible. Our national unity should be a mixture of Jose Dolores Estrada, (?Janes Castro), Zeledon, Sandino, Carlos Fonseca, and Pedro Joaquin Chamorro, who was murdered by Somoza. This is a patriotic mixture that would first of all protect national interests. We want to reiterate our willingness to fulfill the Guatemala accords.

A national dialogue has been held here. Nicaragua is the only Central American country in which a national dialogue was being held. It is not our fault this first national dialogue has been suspended. We have not withdrawn from it. The Nicaraguan Government representatives are sitting down, waiting for the other side to resume the dialogue. National dialogue under the Guatemala accords is not intended to be interpreted as a dialogue between opposition groups and the government leading to the government doing everything the opposition groups demand. A national dialogue in accordance with each country's constitution means the government will listen, take notice, accept what it regards as reasonable, and turn down what it regards as unreasonable.

A national dialogue cannot violate the Constitution. We cannot conceive of creating a parliament that would have the same power as this Assembly. This parliament—the Assembly, the people's congress directly elected by the people—represents seven political parties. The rest is speculation. To speak of the potential political power of the other opposition parties, which did not want to participate in the elections and which, therefore, are not represented in this parliament, is pure speculation. This is because power is measured through elections.

So we cannot risk depriving the Nicaraguan parliament, the Nicaraguan National Assembly, of its legal status regarding the national dialogue. The national dialogue does not intend to negate this parliament but to enrich and strengthen it. We cannot laud or accept positions that accept foreign aggression. We must condemn these positions. This does not deny the existence of political pluralism in Nicaragua. We have mentioned political pluralism, which is a reality for the first time in Nicaragua's history. We will keep advocating this political pluralism. We have said that in the hypothetical case that another party is elected to govern the country in future elections, such a party could and would surely take over the government. But it would not assume power, because power originates in the people, power resides in the people, and the people can remove or install any party whenever the people regard this as proper. Power does not belong to any particular party or political organization but to the Nicaraguan people.

In view of the war and possible additional aid to the mercenaries, I think Nicaraguans who have a minimum of dignity, even if they oppose the Nicaraguan people, cannot but agree with what a U.S. Congressman, Representative [name indistinct], has said now that additional aid to the mercenaries is being discussed. He said this agreement is a pig. They are discussing ways to keep financing the mercenaries. This congressman opposes any further aid to the mercenaries. He said: This agreement is a pig. We have dressed it in a tuxedo, but it is still a pig.

If a U.S. Congressmen could say this, I think nothing less could be expected from those who oppose the Nicaraguan Government yet have a minimum of national dignity. It is because of this minimum of national dignity that we call on all the political forces in our homeland, all the political forces in the civilian opposition, to effectively contribute to the national dialogue. A frustration of the national dialogue affects the peace efforts, fans the flames of war, and increases domestic tension, because the greater the aggression the more we are forced to take the necessary measures to defend ourselves against the U.S. Government's aggressive actions.

If the U.S. Congress approves more aid to the mercenaries, if the U.S. Congress approves more aid by yielding to President Reagan's policy of blackmail, the U.S. congress would mock the sovereign will of the Central American presidents. The U.S. Congress would greatly obstruct the effort our Central American countries are making and the upcoming meeting of presidents slated for 15 January 1988. We Nicaraguans would also be forced to take all necessary measures to firmly defend the legitimate interests of the Nicaraguan people. Thank you very much.

Presidency Declares Christmas Day Truce

PA212222 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 20 Dec 87 p 5

[Communique issued by the Press and Information Directorate of the Presidency in Managua on 20 December]

[Text] The Press and Information Directorate of the Presidency announces that the Sandinist People's Army, in fulfillment of the truce accepted by the president, Commander of the Revolution Daniel Ortega Saavedra, in response to a request made by his Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, in recognition of the Nicaraguan people's religious traditions, has ordered that as of 0000 on 24 [December] until 2400 on 25 December of this year offensive operations will be limited to only repelling any attack and to increased vigilance over economic and civilian objectives as well as defensive positions, to duly repel any mercenary attack.

Managua, 20 December 1987

No one surrenders here!

Press and Information Directorate of the Presidency

Minister on DC-6 Downed in Costa Rica

PA220158 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0035 GMT 22 Dec 87

[Text] A few minutes ago, during a news conference, Commander William Ramirez, minister of transportation, discussed details of the incident in which an Aeronica DC-6 cargo plane was hit this morning over Costa Rican territory, presumably by counterrevolutionaries. Here is an excerpt of Ramirez remarks:

[Begin Ramirez recording] The Nicaraguan control tower cleared the plane for takeoff at 0745. The plane entered Costa Rican territory at 0817. The plane flew on course from Managua and entered Costa Rican territory at 0817. The route the plane was flying leads to Panama. It should have flown over Puerto Limon. The plane said it had an emergency at 0843, when it was already in Costa Rican territory. The Juan Santamaria Airport control tower reported to the Nicaraguan control tower. [Passage indistinct]. Apparently, the emergency occurred in this area. [passage indistinct] [end recording]

Ministry To Protest to U.S.

PA220418 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0224 GMT 22 Dec 87

[Communique issued by the Foreign Ministry in Managua on 21 December]

[Text] The Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry reports the following serious events to the Nicaraguan people and the international community:

Today at approximately 0845, a civilian DC-6 airliner with Nicaraguan registration No 0-DCCE belonging to the Aeronica airline, flying on a weekly schedule from Managua to Panama, was hit near the Costa Rican border by a Redeye surface-to-air missile used by the mercenary forces at the service of the U.S. Government's illegal policy.

While the plane was losing altitude the mercenary forces' attack continued, this time with rifle fire. The plane landed on the Costa Rican La Flor farm, a few kilometers from the Nicaraguan border near the mouth of the San Juan River.

As a result of this action, the following crew members were wounded: Manrique Hidalgo, a Costa Rican citizen, and Nicarguans Octavio Gutierrez, Felix Chavez, Arnoldo Baca, Juan Ocon, and Marvin Arana.

The Nicaraguan Government reports to the international community this new act of state terrorism, which is added to the recent attacks against civilians that the mercenary forces have been conducting, resulting in the tragic murders of many Nicaraguans, including children.

This situation once again reveals that the U.S. Government is trying to frustrate the process of establishing a firm, lasting peace in Central America, which is the result of the political desire of the Central American leaders, who seek a peaceful solution to the regional conflict.

We must stress that this action comes while the U.S. Congress is discussing new aid to the mercenary groups.

The Foreign Ministry is issuing a strong protest to the United States for this criminal act, which reveals, as the Nicaraguan Government has said repeatedly, that the delivery of Redeye missiles to the mercenary forces would be a serious danger to international civilian aviation almost equivalent to mining the airways.

In the same manner, the Nicaraguan Government will deliver a detailed report on these events to the International Civil Aviation Organization.

In the note the Nicaraguan Government will deliver, it will call on the U.S. Administration to refrain from continuing to endanger international air navigation.

The Nicaraguan Government holds the U.S. Government directly responsible for the real and dangerous consequences of the continued use of this type of weapon supplied by the U.S. Administration in open defiance of international law, of the decree issued by the International Court of Justice on 27 June 1986, and of the Central American peoples' desire for peace.

Managua, 21 December 1987

Sandinist Delegation Arrives for Contra Talks

PA202010 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1905 GMT 20 Dec 87

[Text] Santo Domingo, 20 Dec (EFE)—The Nicaraguan Government's delegation to the second round of indirect talks with the contra rebels arrived this afternoon in this capital. It is headed by Nicaraguan Vice Foreign Minister Victor Hugo Tinoco.

The meeting, which has been baptized "Santo Domingo II," has been set for tomorrow, Monday, because Nicaraguan Archbishop Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo will not arrive until then.

Obando will arrive here early tomorrow afternoon leading a delegation of Catholic prelates composed of Bishops Guiseppe Sancti and Cesar Bosco Vivas and Father Ariel Ortega. They will immediately begin to mediate between the government and contra representatives.

The Sandinist delegation that arrived this afternoon is composed, in addition to Tinoco, of Chief of Army Intelligence Ricardo Wheelock, Luis Guzman, and Oscar Tellez.

There has been no change in the delegations that began the indirect talks in this capital, but both sides now have military advisers who will discuss the technical aspects of a cease-fire.

The Nicaraguan Government military advisers are Hans Jurgen Wichnewski, of the German Social Democratic Party; and Paul Richler and David Widman, two U.S. attorneys. The "Nicaraguan Resistance" (contra) advisers are commanders identified only as Tono and Johnson.

Harvard University professor Roger Fischer and Mark Gordon will be present during the direct talks among the military advisers. They will cooperate with both the Sandinists and the contras to help bring peace to Nicaragua.

Danilo Valle, the Nicaraguan ambassador to the Dominican Republic—which is hosting the talks—has told EFE that during Obando's absence the Sandinist delegation will hold a consultation meeting with its military advisers.

Obando y Bravo on Talks

PA211556 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1419 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Report by Mario Antonio Zelaya on interview with Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo by unidentified reporters at the Augusto Cesar Sandino International Airport in Managua; date not given]

[Excerpt] [Zelaya] His Eminence Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo, mediator in the cease-fire talks, is about to fly to Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic. He will participate in the second round of talks with the mercenary chieftains. Cardinal Obando y Bravo is traveling with Msgrs Carlos Santi, Bosco Vivas, and Father Ariel Ortega. Upon arriving at Augusto Cesar Sandino International Airport he talked to newsmen.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] Do you think it is counterproductive that while the negotiation for a cease-fire is being discussed, the counterrevolutionaries attacked three Atlantic Coast villages yesterday?

[Obando y Bravo] I am not a partisan of war; that is why I am a mediator. We have only really achieved a cease-fire on 24 and 25 December. As bishop, I would like the war to end. However, since the government and the resistence have only agreed to [words indistinct] on 24 and 25 December. As mediator I certainly would like to have peace, but those are the facts.

[Reporter] Your Eminence, if you do not find flexibility in either of the two sides, will you continue as mediator or will you resign?

[Obando y Bravo] If we saw that we had reached an impasse and that there was no political commitment to try to resolve these problems through the appropriate means—that is, conversations and talks—then the team advising me would have to meet. Msgrs Bosco Vivas, Carlos Santi, Father Ariel Ortega, and I are going to see whether or not we continue.

[Reporter] How do you feel regarding the approval of another $8 million for the mercenaries?

[Obando y Bravo] If you are talking (?about my views), you must realize that at this time a mediator cannot take a stand one way or another—if one is a mature and sensible person.

[Reporter] What impact can the recent military actions have on the truce? What can its impact be?

[Obando y Bravo] I think this should press us to seek formulas for peace. As I said before, 50 to 60 youths are dying each day. That worries us. The war itself worries me. I am not a partisan of war; I would like a solution to be found. That is why I am making the effort of traveling. I am a very busy person. Msgrs Santi and Bosco and the people traveling with me do so in the hope of finding a peace formula for this country, which is bleeding.

[Reporter] Your Eminence, here is a very important matter. When the Nicaraguan Government appointed you as mediator, it said you could comment, suggest, and advise. Supposing that at the last moment the two sides are inflexible. What would you advise or suggest?

[Obando y Bravo] If we [words indistinct] the moment when the dialogue reaches a stalemate. We have encountered difficulties from the start. One of the difficulties we encountered is that the resistance wants to have the meetings in Nicaragua or any Central American country. The Nicaraguan Government, however, says we should meet in Washington. We suggested that the meeting be in the Dominican Republic. Thank God, the Dominican Republic has opened its doors. The Dominican Government has been very kind to us. For that reason we have met. [passage omitted] [end recording]

FRG Sandinist Adviser on Talks

DW211959 Mainz ZDF Television Network in German 1800 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Interview with Hans-Juergen Wischnewski, official of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), by correspondent Albrecht Heise on the "Heute" newscast; in Santo Domingo on 21 December—recorded]

[Text] [Heise] Mr Wischnewski, you are a member of the Sandinist delegation; you are an adviser.

[Wischnewski] I am here as a Social Democrat who has been able for years to gather special experiences about this difficult area of Central America. In the past I helped resolve some of the problems. It is those experiences that will be used here now. That is why I was asked to come here.

[Heise] You were called. Was it your idea to come here to exert all of your power in favor of the Sandinists?

[Wischnewski] I was invited by the Nicaraguan Government to help arrange a cease-fire in that terrible war. However, I also regard it as my task to support Cardinal Obando y Bravo—who is the mediator—during his difficult mission.

[Heise] Can we interpret your coming here as a sign that there are chances for progress now after all?

[Winschnewski] I think it must be seen very clearly that the differences between the warring sides continue to be very great. At this moment I cannot say whether they will be overcome this time. I can only say that differences are still very great. What is essential is reaching rapprochement. I do not think this will be the last meeting.

Talks Reach 'Impasse'

FL221233 Bonaire Trans World Radio in English 1130 GMT 22 Dec 87

[Excerpt] The latest round of peace talks between the Nicaraguan Government and the contra rebels has broken down. The talks being held in the Dominican Republic had been aimed at securing a cease-fire in Nicaragua's civil war; it was the second in a series of mediations.

The impasse apparently happened because of the Nicaraguan Government's insistence on being represented by foreigners rather than by Nicaraguan nationals.

The foreign advisers were appointed because of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega's refusal to hold direct negotiations with the contras. [passage omitted]

Contra Withdraw to Honduras After Attacks

PA211816 Managua Radio Noticias in Spanish 1200 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Report by Carlos Jose Guadamuz, Voz de Nicaragua director]

[Text] Four hundred men, not 7,000, as the U.S.mercenary agents falsely reported, attacked Siuna; 400 men attacked Rosita, and 200 attacked Bonanza. This means 1,000 mercenaries attacked these three targets—Siuna, Rosita, and Bonanza—not 7,000 as was falsely reported by the U.S. mercenaries in the United States.

The first attack occurred at 0300 at the La Rosita mine. The mercenaries were defeated by 1100. After repelling the attack, the mercenaries were pursued in the La Rosita area, and there were some skirmishes in cooperatives in (Tas), (Miuna), Mukuhuas, and El Zopiloto. There were some clashes with the mercenaries in these three cooperatives while the mercenaries were fleeing in disarray, after they were repelled from the La Rosita mine. Ten contras were killed in these clashes. These 10 contras also destroyed a MICONS [Ministry of Construction] installation. MICONS is the ministry building roads, bridges, and access roads so workers and peasants in the region can take their crops to the markets and so people can be productive in remote regions in the country. To attack a MICONS base is to attack the people. It is the same as attacking a health center or a school because MICONS is building roads for peasants in the country.

We received reports saying that yesterday at 1600 there were still some skirmishes in some of Siuna's neighborhoods. However, it seems that now (?the situation) is under control.

We want to point out that these clashes have occurred near the Honduran border. After attacking the civilian targets in Nicaragua the contras withdrew to their sanctuary in Honduras, the area where they remain, in Honduran territory, near the Nicaraguan border. We must also emphasize that these attacks take place in border areas, so the contras can attack and return to their bases.

These desperate actions are occurring now because the U.S. Congress is discussing new military aid for the contras. Thus, the contras are carrying out these desperate actions to get the attention of U.S. Congressmen and obtain the approval for more funds to commit crimes and murders, such as the repulsive crime committed against five innocent peasant children in Kukumeca, as we already reported. This, we repeat, is the kind of Christmas President Reagan, the mercenaries, and their allies are giving Nicaraguan children.

Defense Ministry on Situation

PA211904 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 1810 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Report by Mario Zelaya]

[Text] We have a Defense Ministry report on the military situation in Siuna, Rosita, and Bonanza.

The situation in Siuna and Rosita is under control. The EPS has gotten the situation under control there. Damages are currently being evaluated by the Defense Ministry. It has been reported that a fuel tank has been destroyed by Reagan's mercenaries in Siuna. A few government warehouses have also been destroyed.

There are 53 injured civilians, 4 dead mercenaries, and 10 EPS casualties among militia and permanent soldiers. In Rosita, 20 contras have been killed, and the EPS has suffered 13 casualties. Regarding the situation in Bonanza, we report that clashes continue. This has been a last-minute report.

Argentina

Caputo Comments on River Plate Meeting

PY212005 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0201 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Text] Buenos Aires, 20 Dec (TELAM)—Foreign Minister Dante Caputo tonight stated that several steps for socioeconomic integration in Latin America were taken at the recent River Plate basin organization meeting.

Returning from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, where he met with his counterparts from Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, the Argentine foreign minister stressed that achievements, and not merely rethoric, will follow this meeting.

He said that during the meeting they discussed the use of existing resources, such as ways to increase regional trade and improve transport.

Communist Party Evaluates Political Situation

PY220104 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2225 GMT 19 Dec 87

[Text] Buenos Aires, 19 Dec (NA)—The PCA Central Committee will use the Broad Front for Liberation (FRAL) to strengthen its alliances with the leftist sectors and oppose [words indistinct] the UCD [Democratic Centrist Union].

In the union sector the PCA decided "to work for unity among the combative unions, including the vanguard sectors of the Group of 25, by advocating protest and unity of action."

This statement was made at the conclusion of a 3-day meeting held by about 100 PCA Central Committee members at the party headquarters at 1000 Entre Rios Street. The PCA also rendered homage to Fredy Rojas, the young PCA militant who died in Tucuman in an attack by the bodyguard of General Antonio Domingo Bussi, retired, during the last electoral campaign.

The PCA Central Committee also approved an action plan for the 1989 elections. The details of the electoral campaign will be debated in the first few months of next year.

The PCA made an evaluation of the current administration's 4 years in office, saying that the government "strengthened its tendency to lean toward the right in favor of the privileged sectors, real salaries fell 30 percent, the foreign debt increased from $46 billion in 1983 to $55 billion in 1987, and $14.5 billion was used during that period to pay foreign banks, which aggravated social problems."

The PCA document, entitled "More Crisis, Less Democracy," says "there is less democracy than 4 years ago" and "despite the fact that the people on the street showed it is possible to prevent a new coup, the government paid them back with a happy Easter and a due obedience law."

The document also says "the majority of the people responsible for the genocide are free, threats and kidnappings proliferate, and there are more political prisoners." The document adds that "the people expressed their repudiation and hope for change in 10 general strikes and in this year's elections."

The document indicates that "in order to maintain their influence the priviliged sectors are counting on the Consensus Board, on the search for 'pacts,' on union bureaucracy, and on refined means of repression because they know the people are regaining their will for struggle and change, as shown by their participation in rejecting the Holy Week event and their joining in strikes."

Regarding the political plan the PCA Central Committee decided to support "the reorganization of combative and anti-bureaucratic sectors along with the Peronist left, who are joining the Renewal Movement to organize a plan to struggle against the current economic policies. The plan includes hunger marches, banging on pans, civil resistance to paying taxes, and ways to organize and lead the people."

Bolivia

Planning Minister Calls for Social Pact

PY220123 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2106 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Text] La Paz, 21 Dec (EFE)—Planning Minister Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada has called for a social pact between the government and the workers in order to face the economic crisis, and he warned that if the pact is not achieved "we will sink the boat."

Sanchez de Lozada described as ill-advised and "of little use" an indefinite general strike called by the COB for 7 January to protest the government's lack of interest in a document containing the labor sector's economic and social demands.

The COB today reiterated that the strike was called to pressure the government into discussing the labor sector's petition before the 1988 budget is approved.

The planning minister stated that the strike will harm not only the workers, but all Bolivians.

He added that the government is willing to talk with the COB after the budget has been approved.

According to the minister, the 1988 budget is aimed at curbing inflation, and this will permit the government to grant salary increases at the level the workers have demanded.

Sanchez de Lozada said the high social cost of inflation is the reason the government will continue its current economic policy of stabilization.

Coca Growers Oppose New Bill in Congress

PY191414 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0357 GMT 19 Dec 87

[Text] La Paz, 18 Dec (EFE)—More than 2,500 coca growers from across Bolivia are going to meet on 11 and 12 January 1988 in Cochabamba to study measures to face a new draft law on dangerous substances that the government has submitted to the national Congress for approval.

The call for the meeting was made by the COB at the request of several growers, asking workers and peasants to defend coca growing. This information was given to EFE by COB member Filemon Escobar.

Escobar indicated that a congress of coca growers in Chapare concluded that the draft law on dangerous substances that will be debated by Congress next January was prepared with the advice of the U.S. Administration.

Escobar said the draft law only allows coca growing in the Yungas zone, La Paz Department, prohibiting it throughout the remaining Bolivian territory and establishing prison terms and fines for violators of the law.

Escobar added that approval of the bill would authorize direct repression against peasants who refuse to destroy their coca plantations, which in turn will cause violent clashes.

Escobar also pointed out that the U.S. Embassy in La Paz "is exerting pressure and using blackmail with the threat of cutting off economic aid in order to get this brutal law approved."

Escobar said: "The coca growers' decision to no longer destroy even a single leaf of coca was made because the government has not fulfilled its promise to compensate with money and development programs the peasants who reduced their coca cultivation."

Brazil

Sarney Approves Fiscal Package, Measures

PY212309 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2100 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Excerpts] President Jose Sarney today announced that he had already approved the fiscal package, the details of which were released by acting Finance Minister Mailson Nobrega at the Finance Ministry.

According to President Sarney, these measures are designed to fight the public deficit, to rationalize government spending, and to curb inflation. The adjustment of the progressive income tax table will stand at 250 percent.

The president said this adjustment will not affect wage earners. [passage omitted]

President Sarney also reported that he did not approve cuts among state-owned enterprises. He announced, however, that beginning in January the government will conduct a comprehensive study to see what can be eliminated to reduce the public deficit.

With the exception of a few measures that will be forwarded to Congress as draft laws, the new fiscal and tax package announced today by acting Finance Minister Nobrega has been approved by President Sarney.

The new package introduces changes, which will go into effect in January 1988, in the income tax table to reduce by 7 percent in real terms the tax paid monthly by wage earners having only one source of income. As a result of this reduction, the country will have a 1-percent increase in its GDP, that is, 120 billion cruzados. Any tax balance to be paid or to be reimbursed will be subject to full monetary correction. [passage omitted]

A 20-percent fine will be imposed on those failing to fully report their income.

The fiscal package empowers the Interministerial Council for Wages at State-Owned Enterprises [Conselho Interministerial de Salarios de Empresas Estatais], CISE, to establish conditions and limits for salary adjustments in state-owned enterprises. Beginning in January state-owned enterprises will not be allowed to sign agreements that do not meet the conditions established by CISE.

Nobrega also announced the elimination of some fiscal incentives, a 4-percent tax on public bonds, and the privatization of sugar exports.

President Sarney submitted to Congress three draft laws creating three taxes: a tax on capital gains, a tax on wealth, and a decree-law creating a tax on unearned income.

If approved, the cuts in public spending realized by privatizing, eliminating, or merging several state-owned enterprises, which were expected to be part of this package, will be implemented in 1988.

President To Sign Decree on Import Duties

PY191139 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 18 Dec 87 p 20

[Excerpt] Finance Ministry Secretary General Mailson Nobrega yesterday announced that today President Sarney will sign a decree changing the country's customs policy, which will henceforth significantly reduce customs duties across the board.

On the one hand, the measure will help Brazil by promoting easier trade and opening possibilities to raise the annual volume of foreign trade to $70 billion, up from the current $40 billion. On the other hand, the measure should help resolve disputes over protectionism and retaliation against our export products.

The decree, which was prepared by the Customs Policy Commission, sets at 85 percent the maximum customs fee on imports, down from the current 105 percent. Thus, the average across the board percentage will drop to 37 percent, down from 51 percent (which actually is not charged because exemptions and special programs eliminate 75 percent of customs duties). [passage omitted]

Decree-Law Establishes Military Wage Scale

PY191357 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 17 Dec 87 p 2

[All figures as published]

[Excerpts] Brasilia—Navy Minister Admiral Henrique Saboia yesterday confirmed that in accordance with a decree-law signed by the president the salaries of court judges and four-star generals have been set at the same level. The salaries of admirals, generals, and brigadiers are set at 53,000 cruzados [no time period specified]. [passage omitted]

According to the calculations of EMFA [Armed Forces General Staff], which have been partially reported in the military units, beginning in January four-star generals will receive a gross income of 204,453.63 cruzados; division generals, 192,187.38 cruzados; brigadiers, 187,593.53 cruzados; colonels, 152,703.96 cruzados; lieutenant colonels, 139,401.14 cruzados; majors, 127,332.93 cruzados; Esao [Officer Training School] captains, 95,483.36 cruzados; Aman [Agulhas Negras Military Academy] captains, 87,252.03 cruzados; Aman lieutenants, 72,449.32 cruzados; Aman 2d lieutenants, 58,628.60 cruzados; Aman officer candidates, 52,521.42 cruzados; noncommissioned officers, 66,222.66 cruzados; first sergeants, 59,292.24 cruzados; marine corporals [tafieiro-mor], 27,481.95 cruzados; corporals, 28,039,68 cruzados; contracted enlisted men, 6,139.38 cruzados; and preparatory school students, 3,329.86 cruzados. [passage omitted]

Briefs

November Trade Surplus Reported

According to the CACEX [Foreign Trade Department] the trade surplus for November was $1.044 billion. The accrued surplus from January to November totals a little over $10 billion. This and the expected December surplus of $820 million will add to a total surplus for the year of $10.9 billion [Summary] *[Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2200 GMT 16 Dec 87 PY]*

Chile

President Establishes Congress in Valparaiso

PY181834 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1540 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Speech by President Augusto Pinochet at Victoria Square in Valparaiso during a ceremony establishing the Congress in Valparaiso—live]

[Excerpts] Messsrs members of the honorable Government Junta; Messrs ministers of state; generals and admirals; Mr 5th region intendant; Mrs very honorable president of the Valparaiso Court of Appeals; national, regional, provincial, municipal, military, and civilian authorities; friends in the 5th region; Chilean people: [shouts, applause]

The declaration of principles of the Chilean Government states, quote, the decentralization of the government branches, both operationally and territorially, to progress toward achieving a technological society involving real social participation is a key point of the new establishment, unquote.

With this goal in mind, the government has promoted the country's regionalization and administrative reform. These steps have been supported by very broad sectors of the citizenry.

With the same goal in mind, considering our declaration of principles and the provisions established in the Chilean Constitution, and following a geopolitical and socioeconomic review, a proposal was submitted to the honorable Government Junta involving a bill to establish the city of Valparaiso as the seat of Congress and the place where congressional sessions are held. [crowd shouts: "Good! Good!"; applause]

This proposal becomes effective now, at this solemn ceremony promulgating the relevant law. Thus, our traditional and beloved port will now assume the responsibility of becoming the seat of a government branch and emerges as Chile's future maritime capital on the Pacific Ocean by gradually integrating with Santiago.

Thus, Chile will usher in the 21st century by developing the Pacific basin.

An important geopolitical meaning or aspect is involved in the enactment of this important law. [passage omitted]

However, we must not delude ourselves. It is essential to emphasize that the much-awaited development will not be realized merely by establishing the national Congress in Valparaiso. The plan will be implemented soon, and the preliminary work will begin tomorrow. [crowd shouts: "Very Well! Very Well!"; applause]

The aforementioned steps, as well as other steps to be taken in the future, will prove worthless unless they are firmly supported by the people.

I am quite aware of the fact that those who were born in this port are qualified and intelligent enough to carry on. [shouts, applause]

A new light has now appeared. This is a driving force that should promote progress in this area.

Looking at this city, which has witnessed many of my experiences as a child and a young man, I call upon all of you to work harder and with greater resolve for Valparaiso.

The government will supply the tools and the Valparaiso residents their ability and intelligence. [shouts, applause]

Valparaiso must proudly look toward the Pacific Ocean with the important responsibility of projecting our maritime interests toward the Pacific basin, where the future and the 21st century lie.

Thank you very much. [shouts, applause; music heard in background]

Pinochet Comments on Human Rights, Economy

PM211401 London SUNDAY TELEGRAPH in English 20 Dec 87 p 23

[Report by British journalist Alistair Horne: "Chile Comes in From the Cold"; based on an "exclusive" interview with President General Augusto Pinochet in Santiago—no date given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] I went to see General Pinochet—apparently, the first British journalist or writer to be granted an interview for at least the past 10 years. La Moneda [Palace], in the centre of downtown Santiago, is protected by extremely smart, but civil, Carabineros with sub-machine guns.

The president himself is shorter than I expected, dressed in an elegantly tailored civilian suit of shot silk. He is courteous, affable, relaxed—and forthright; and he looks well for a man of 72, despite recurrent rumours in Santiago about his health. His office is furnished in a comfortably unmilitary style: we sit in armchairs; there is a crucifix and a book of poetry open on a reading-stand by his side. He speaks in a low voice, staccato, in that difficult Chilean version of Spanish, and I was grateful to be accompanied by a competent interpreter.

I begin by asking whether my being granted this rare interview might reflect Chile's new mood of self-confidence, combined with her current economic success? He nodded, and with a smile remarked: "I generally avoid seeing journalists—they usually twist things. But I understand you have a reputation for objectivity."

Throughout the interview, he repeatedly showed himself haunted by an aging Caudillo's (dictator's) fears of apres moi. He was determined that Chile should never return to the bad old days of Allende, and that it should never again allow itself to be endangered by Marxist totalitarianism.

Subversion and terrorism he saw as directly traceable to Soviet imperialism: "The evil is managed by Moscow." He warned with emphasis that "Gorbachev is making a fool out of everybody in the whole world; he is as communist as Stalin and Lenin were."

Many Chileans expressed fears to me that the forthcoming elections would be accompanied by a fresh wave of terrorism, designed to disrupt them. But Pinochet was confident that Moscow would issue orders to "cut terrorism, for tactical purposes, so as not to frighten people". Already, now, terrorism in Chile "hardly exists".

While I was in Chile, there was a minor incendiary bomb attack on a supermarket, and a few weeks earlier stone-throwing demonstrations were broken up with water-cannon. But the days of the curfew seem forgotten, and the contrasts with terrorist-ridden Colombia and Peru are manifest. Foreigners observed to me how markedly the tension and fears of the past have disappeared.

I asked General Pinochet why, then, given Chile's new self-confidence, he felt it necessary to pass a new law prohibiting the deployment of Marxist propaganda in the press. This has been sharply criticised by the Inter-American Press Association, then convening in Santiago, as well as by Chilean journalists, as presenting a potential threat to the freedom of the press.

One of Pinochet's former ambassadors, now returned (at his own request) to private life, remarked to me he thought it "a mistake, as it could so easily be turned around against us by any future Socialist regime".

Pinochet made it quite plain to me, however, that he will do everything in his power to forestall a return to any form of socialism in Chile. No other South American country, he pointed out, had ever "reached the position we had in 1973...The 1980 Constitution (which banned all Marxist propaganda against the Government) has been approved by 67 percent of the population", and it now had to be reinforced by law so as "to protect future democratic Governments".

He considered that "a long time will be necessary before democrats realise that they are being infiltrated from the extreme left". He took serious note of the warnings of Jean-Francois Revel, the French conservative writer: "I read everything he writes."

In an earlier conversation, Pinochet's Foreign Secretary, Ricardo Garcia, an attractive and forthright young lawyer who is reckoned likely to have an important future in any new democratic system, told me that the Chilean aim was "to re-create, not to return to democracy... to create a Chilean political framework for many years, with stability".

So I asked the President whether he saw himself as a De Gaulle, remoulding the body politic. He smiled and remarked that he could not make any comparisons: "All I know is that, like him, I risk my life every day ... but that is not important..."

Although he is widely read in military history, Pinochet restricts his thoughts narrowly to the Chile he knows. He would not be drawn out on such topics as Nicaragua, or the role of the Church in Chilean politics, or on the fate of the generals in neighbouring Argentina, or on the fate of Las Malvinas (although Chile proved itself, at some cost to its relations with Argentina, to be Britain's best South American ally during the Falklands war).

When I tried to draw him out on the similarities of Chile's currently very successful free-market economy with Thatcherism, he remarked that he had first heard of Mrs Thatcher's philosophies only six years ago but now found himself in total agreement. He admired her: "It is comforting to know that our successes are being repeated in other countries." It was also his ambition "to limit the power of the state in the economy". But, he stressed: "I am neither Right nor Left—I am a Chilean."

He moved on to the delicate issue of human rights. I put to him the French Army's experiences during the Algerian war—how, by resort to torture, it had won battles but lost the war through the revulsion of public opinion at home and abroad. Why had Chile not shown more concern about its public image in the past? If there were a renewal of terrorism in the future, could the Government guarantee that it would meet it without the unacceptably harsh measures of the past—specifically torture?

He riposted: "Do the communists, do the Cubans, recognise human rights?" I remarked, perhaps rather piously, that surely the West had to set higher standards. He laughed: for Chile it was "a problem of time, to get over the torture image". The Soviet Union was "expert in disinformation and has spent millions of dollars in pursuit of its objectives". He had been offered the services of various Western PR companies to improve the Chilean image—"but I refused; I would rather spend the pesos on the welfare of the Chileans."

Chile must be one of the few countries in the world currently having a boom, partly because of record copper prices. Compared with the bad old days of Allende's reforma agraria, Chile's farms are also back on stream, providing this year—despite droughts and floods—a significant food surplus for export.

From being a "one-crop" country dependent on the world copper market, Chile has succeeded in diversifying extensively both in products and trading partners. Two bright young economists (this is where the talent in Chile seems to go these days, instead of into politics) described to me, with enthusiastic optimism, how, over the past year, "an avalanche" of new Australian and New Zealand investment has flooded in.

With striking resemblances to Thatcher's Britain, national industries like electricity, telephones, the LAN Chilean airline and even pension funds are being privatised. One private entrepreneur, by no means an uncritical supporter of Pinochet, predicted to me that, at this rate, Chile might have left the ranks of the underdeveloped countries within 10 years.

Censorship is easing, slowly, and in conversation there is absolutely no restraint (Chileans have always said what they like). Over lunch, two young Chileans were openly critical of Pinochet in front of me, knowing me to be a journalist who was about to interview him.

In contrast to democratic but highly nervy Peru, there is also little overt sign of a police state. On my first night in Santiago, while dining in a restaurant, Pinochet's daughter and a young man came in and sat at a table nearby. Nobody paid them any attention, or lowered their voices, and there was no obvious sign of security guards.

The next year will be an exciting, and challenging, time for Chile. Will the elections be genuine, given the exclusion of all "Marxist" parties? Garcia, the Foreign Minister, assured me that they would be: "And do you know of any other dictatorship that has fixed its own end?"

It is not yet certain whether Pinochet himself will stand for election, or whether he will win if he does; or even how the plebisicite will be worded. Other members of the ruling Junta have openly said they would oppose his candidature; 14 years is enough, and another term would bring Pinochet into his 80s. In conversation with me, the old General would not be drawn.

On the other hand, recent polls suggest that he could achieve a majority, honestly won. Even his harshest critics find it hard to make charges of corruption stick on this puritanical military regime. The opposition parties, nine of them so far registered, are still hopelessly divided among themselves, with no obvious leaders.

By 1989 there will be many younger Chilean voters who do not remember those bad old days; and no one knows how they, bored with the military, will vote. Yet there is optimism in the air.

On a short visit, one can hardly do more than sense the mood of a country. But, recalling the frenzy of class warfare on the Left and the drab, apprehensive gloom of the middle classes at the time of Allende, I did not feel this was an unhappy country, even down amongst the lakes and volcanoes of its traditionally backward far south.

Nevertheless, one senses that the Chileans feel they know where they are going. They badly want to come in out of the cold, from the physical isolation that surrounds them. Should they not be given a fair chance by the outside world?

Politician Criticizes Reagan Statement

PY212120 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Excerpts] Former Minister Sergio Onofre Jarpa, president of the National Renewal Party, has harshly criticized political leaders who are receiving foreign financial aid. Jarpa also called on government officials to enforce existing laws against the politicians who are obtaining that aid. [pasage omitted]

Jarpa reiterated his desire for the current government to extend its administration beyond 1989. He said the Armed Forces should continue to play an important role in political decisions. [passage omitted]

Jarpa also criticized President Ronald Reagan's statement calling for conditions of freedom, justice, and equal access to the media during the upcoming electoral process.

[Begin Jarpa recording] Every time the U.S. Government intervenes in the political affairs of another country, things go very badly for that country. This is what happened in Vietnam, and this is what happens to countries that follow orders from the U.S. Government, not only in the political field but in the economic as well. The U.S. Government imposed the agrarian reform, and you all know the results. Naturally that U.S. intervention received the support of the same parties that are now advocating foreign intervention in Chile.

I am not surprised to see the U.S. efforts to intervene in Latin American internal affairs because this intervention can be seen throughout history. But history also shows that these interventions have almost always—I would say always—failed completely to achieve their goals. [end recording]

Regarding the statement by the Episcopal Conference calling on government officials to open themselves to dialogue and put an end to the idea that opposition

members are enemies, Sergio Onofre Jarpa said it is difficult to hold a dialogue with people who believe the country is currently ungovernable. [passage omitted]

UN Observer Volio Ends Mission, Departs

PY221156 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 0930 GMT 22 Dec 87

[Excerpt] Before leaving our country, UN observer Fernando Volio said that it is not fair to say that everything in Chile is wrong. When asked at the international airport whether he was bothered by the criticism that he has received from several sectors, Volio said those people have the right to express their opinion. He said that it is not positive to say that everything in Chile is going wrong, just as it is also not correct to say that everything is fine, because this would render useless all government efforts. [passage omitted]

Judge Cited on FPMR Organization, Structure

PY181313 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 0930 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Ad hoc military judge Fernando Torres Silva has said that the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front [FPMR] acts under the joint comand of seven or eight national commanders, each one in his respective area. The military judge stressed that these commanders act in an independent fashion but also receive certain instructions from abroad.

Answering questions on actions conducted by this terrorist organization, Torres Silva said that quite often these actions are interrelated. However, the importance of some operations demonstrates that the FPMR actions are definitely handled from abroad and their internal communications are coordinated, Torres Silva said.

In conclusion, Torres Silva said he was sure the FPMR cells recently disrupted in southern Chile were involved in the arsenals case. He added that the weapons found are identical to the ones found in 1986 in northern Chile, and he described this case as extremely interesting.

Briefs

Trade Increase Reported

The Chilean Central Bank Foreign Trade Department reported that trade increased by 22.9 percent in the first three quarters of the year compared to the same period last year. [Summary] *[Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 16 Dec 87 PY]*

Colombia

Ministry Revokes Ochoa Extradition Order

PA181706 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0155 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Bogota, 17 Dec (EFE)—The Colombian Justice Ministry today revoked the extradition order for Colombian drug trafficker Jorge Luis Ochoa. Ochoa, the "number two man" in the "Medellin Cartel," is imprisoned in Bogota.

Ochoa was informed of the decision in the "La Picota" jail, where he has been held prisoner since he was inadvertently captured by the police on 21 November while driving a luxury car.

The Justice Ministry decided to revoke the extradition order because of a petition submitted by a group of lawyers which stated there is currently no valid extradition treaty between the United States and Colombia.

Humberto Barrera Domingo, spokesman for the lawyers defending Ochoa, stated that now there is no reason to hold the alleged drug trafficker in prison, except for a 20-month sentence for illegally importing fighting bulls. This sentence originally stated that Ochoa did not have to be imprisoned if he periodically appeared in court.

In addition, drug trafficking charges are pending in a Medellin court but the judge in that case has not ordered Ochoa's arrest.

The 1979 extradition treaty between Colombia and the United States was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Justice last July and is, therefore, invalid.

According to Ochoa's lawyers, the previous treaties are not valid, either. This argument was accepted by the Justice Ministry today when it revoked the extradition order against Ochoa.

The "Medellin Cartel" is the world's most important drug trafficking mafia and is responsible for more than 80 percent of the cocaine traffic between South America and the United States.

UP Deputy 'Seriously Injured' in Antioquia

PA180344 Bogota Inravision Telvision Cadena 2 in Spanish 1730 GMT 17 Dec 87

[Text] Gabriel Jaime Santamaria, Patriotic Union [UP] Antioquia Department deputy, was attacked this morning. Two men on a motorcycle threw a grenade into Santamaria's car. Santamaria and his driver were seriously injured. This is the second attack on Gabriel Jaime Santamaria in Antioquia.

Ecuador

OPEC Authorizes Increased Oil Production

PA151554 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Dec 87

[Text] OPEC has authorized Ecuador to produce 300,000 barrels of oil a day for 1 year. This was reported by Dr. Hernan Chiriboga, minister in charge of energy and mines. He disclosed that OPEC accepted the report presented by Ecuador on the losses suffered by the country during a 5-month export paralyzation and a debt of nearly 15 million barrels of oil with Venezuela and Nigeria. This oil was loaned during the emergency.

This decision will be reviewed by the cartel in June at the next ordinary meeting of OPEC ministers. With this increase in production, Ecuador will have the capacity to pay the foreign debt without neglecting domestic needs and sales contracts overseas, said the minister.

Chiriboga added that 1.458 million barrels have been repaid thus far, without over-exploiting the oil fields.

Briefs

Foreign Debt Payment Plans

Based on renegotiations between Ecuador and creditor banks, it was reported today that in 1988 Ecuador plans to use 53 percent of its exports, including oil, to pay its foreign debt. Ecuador renegotiated its foreign debt in mid-November and received $350 million in new loans. In exchange, the country agreed to renew servicing of its foreign debt, which had been suspended in January due to "cash flow problems." [Excerpts] *[Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1430 GMT 17 Dec 87 PA]*

Paraguay

Saldivar Calls for Latin American Unity

PY212253 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 20 Dec 87 p 12

[Quotation marks as published]

[Excerpt] According to the FRG news agency DPA, Paraguayan Foreign Minister Carlos Augusto Saldivar on 19 December called for Latin American unity to confront "exploitation by the opulent countries," adding that this desire for integration is winning acceptance among Latin American people."

The source added that when he referred to the foreign debt, Saldivar stated that although Paraguay has managed this problem reasonably well and is up to date on the interest payments of its debt, it supports the joint position assumed by the Latin American countries."

The German news agency also reported that when asked about Paraguay's internal situation Saldivar said "there is participation and democracy in the pre-election atmosphere the country is currently experiencing," adding that the government has given every type of guarantee to the participating parties and has made everything easy for them. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister on River Basin Meeting

PY220149 Asuncion EL DIARIO in Spanish 21 Dec 87 p 12

[Excerpts] Returning from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, Paraguayan Foreign Minister Carlos Augusto Saldivar yesterday said the River Plate Basin foreign ministers supported at the meeting the creation of a regional bank that will support the organization's development.

The Paraguayan delegation headed by Minister Saldivar returned to the country yesterday morning. On 18 and 19 December they participated in the 17th meeting of foreign ministers of the River Plate Basin countries.

At the airport Saldivar explained the achievements of the meeting to this newspaper. [passage omitted]

He stated: "We studied the reports submitted by the Inter-Governmental Coordinating Committee and the River Plate Basin Financial Fund."

Saldivar added: "Instructions have been given for future actions, and we believe they are very important steps which will allow us to fulfill the 1969 treaty."

"We want the Financial Fund to become a bank for the development of the River Plate Basin and to continue granting the same aid, although in greater amounts and more effectively," Saldivar stated. [passage omitted]

Political Prisoner Released After 25 Years

PY211542 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 21 Dec 87 p 68

[Text] Captain Modesto Napoleon Ortigoza Gomez, who is considered the longest serving political prisoner in South America, was released early yesterday morning after 25 years of imprisonment. Ortigoza has been banished to San Estanislao, where he will remain for 30 days on "orders from above," according to Ortigoza's statement.

Ortigoza, who was indicted by a military court, completed his sentence on 17 December. Instead of being released, however, he was held incommunicado until yesterday for unspecified reasons. During a news conference in which Ortigoza's daughters also participated, Ortigoza's lawyer Digno Britez denounced this situation and said that the captain was being illegally held. Britez filed a writ of habeas corpus with the Supreme Court on behalf of Ortigoza on 17 December.

Rumors of Ortigoza's imminent release prompted the mass media to remain on permanent alert near the Asuncion Police Specialized Unit, where Ortigoza was being held, since the day on which Ortigoza was supposed to have been released.

It was reported, however, that the mass media were not able to witness Ortigoza's release due to the inappropriate hour at which the captain was set free.

Upon arriving at San Estanislao, Capt Ortigoza told an HOY network reporter: "I have no resentment against anybody."

Concerning his current situation, Ortigoza added: "I am not yet completely free, but I am well and calm because I did not harm anybody. I am the one who has been harmed by all the things I have experienced." Ortigoza said he was not guilty of the charges filed against him.

Ortigoza recalled the difficult situation he underwent during his long imprisonment, especially the 18 years during which he had been held shackled in a tiny room at the Asuncion police headquarters. He said that his only contact with the outside world was through a small 10 cm by 15 cm peephole. "I could only see the walls and the roof because the door was always closed," he said.

Ortigoza on Release

PY212030 Asuncion HOY in Spanish 21 December p 68

Report on interview with Captain Modesto Napoleon Ortigoza Gomez with unidentified report; date not given]

[Text] "I am very happy to be here, although I am still somewhat imprisoned, not completely free...I thought I was going straight home..." said Captain Ortigoza as he began a phone conversation with HOY, the first newspaper to get in touch with him after his "restricted release"—as he put it—at the Hotel Martinez in San Estanislao.

"I have not yet talked with any journalists. You are the first one with whom I have talked, except the policeman who interviewed me at the security guard headquarters last Saturday; he claimed he was a reporter from the newspaper PATRIA," said Capt Ortigoza in answer to a question.

[Question] When did you learn you were to be released?

[Answer] I was told yesterday (Saturday), and I was brought to San Estanislao today. They woke me up at about 0300 saying, "Get up, Captain, we are going to Santani," and here I am. I want to make it clear that I am here against my will. They took my fingerprints and told me that "on orders from the top" I was to remain here in restricted freedom, before I am granted total freedom-...they told me at which hotel to stay.

[Question] Captain, excuse me for asking you to recall your past situation, but I want to specifically ask if you still maintain you are innocent of the crimes with which you were charged.

[Answer] I am innocent. Moreover, I was never taken to court, and I was never given a chance to defend myself.

[Question] Then why were you involved in all this? Do you blame someone for what has happened to you?

[Answer] Yes, I blame Ramon Duarte Vera [Asuncion police chief when Ortigoza was arrested in the early 1960's]. It was all because of false information he gave to General Stroessner. Duarte Vera himself once said to me: Well, Captain, what can we do? I have already told it to Gen Stroessner...

[Question] And in the case of the killing of Cadet Benitez?

[Answer] I believe I was involved in it by mistake. According to reports, the police found the body and charged me with the crime, supposedly because I was involved in a conspiracy.

[Question] Then you deny that you had anything to do with that killing?

[Answer] I was Joint Staff Chief of the Cavalry...I was a cavalry officer, and I had nothing to do with the Military Lyceum. What contact could I have with a cadet from another institution? I suspect that Cadet Benitez was killed by the police...there are many things I could say, but I beg you to understand my situation. I am not yet totally free.

[Question] If you really considered yourself innocent, how could you endure all those years in prison?

[Answer] I endured because of my spiritual strength. Material things come and go, but there is no replacement for spiritual strength.

[Question] It has often been said you were kept in prison in inhumane conditions. What can you tell us about it?

[Answer] To give you an idea, I can tell you that I was kept in shackles for 18 years at the police central headquarters, in a small windowless room. There was only a 5-by-7 inch opening in the door. I could see nothing but the room's walls and ceiling because the door was always closed.

[Question] Did your situation improve at the security guard headquarters?

[Answer] Yes, because the cell had windows. They were closed at first, but one day I broke the glass. I cut my hands, but from then on I could breath some air.

[Question] The glass was not replaced?

[Answer] No, no; the glass was not replaced.

[Question] Do you feel hatred toward anyone because of what happened, Captain?

[Answer] I harbor hatred against no one. I only feel gratitude toward all who believed in my innocence and defended me...Dr Alberto Varesini Closa, who was beaten because of my case...Dr Diaz Perez, Msgr Rolon, and of course Dr Digno Britez, my last defender. Did you tell me you are from the newspaper HOY? I want to thank its owner, Dominguez Dibb. This newspaper always publicized my case. At the security guard headquarters I used to read everything the newspaper carried on my case.

[Question] Regarding your current situation, are you afraid of anything?

[Answer] I am not afraid of anything, not even of the police...I feel good because I hurt no one. I was the only one hurt in all this.

[Question] If you wanted to leave Santani now, could you do it?

[Answer] No, I can't. I just told Mr Martinez, the hotel owner, that I was going home. He told me not to do it, please, because if I wanted to go he would have to inform the authorities. I decided not to leave because I don't want to get this good man in trouble. He is very nice to me.

[Question] What are you doing right now, Captain?

[Answer] I am having a snack and drinking a beer...and talking with Mr Martinez. I feel fine.

[Question] How long since you have had a beer?

[Answer] I don't remember, but they sometimes gave me a beer at the security guard headquarters. Very few times, but they gave me some beer. They used to tell me, never mind, Captain, have a drink...and I would do so. Some people treated me very well; others told me no, no, no drink.

[Question] Do you have any political leanings, Captain?

[Answer] I was a career officer. To sign up with a political party would have created a problem at that time. I was graduated in 1950. On 14 May 1950 I was the top graduate of the General Bernardino Caballero class [of the military academy]. I was the top graduate of the class in the cavalry service. I earned the best marks in many subjects, with a 9.75 average. I have no political leanings, but President Stroessner said I was involved in a plot to overthrow him. And if he said so, well, let's say that it was so.

Peru

Communique on Exchange Rate With U.S. Dollar

PA212313 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 0100 GMT 20 Dec 87

[Communique issued by General Secretariat of the Central Reserve Bank on 20 December in Lima]

[Text] 1. Through a decision by the Central Reserve Bank, the exchange rate in U.S. dollars for the importation of staple foodstuffs and basic medicine will be maintained at the level in effect before the recent exchange rate measures. Consequently, the prices of staple foodstuffs and basic medicine cannot be increased.

2. In the case of home appliances, a [price] adjustment of up to 19 percent has been authorized because of the new exchange rate. Consequently, the prices of such appliances cannot be increased by more than that percentage.

3. Bearing in mind that many firms have had no choice but to refinance their imports, the Central Reserve Bank has ordered that the exchange rate at which the transactions were registered be honored. Consequently, the prices of these products cannot be increased.

4. Businesses that unduly increase their prices during this Christmas season claiming a higher exchange rate will be drastically penalized.

[Signed] General Secretariat

Lima, 20 December 1987

Guyana

Sugar Group Chairman Criticizes Quota 'Slash'

FL220028 Bridgetown CANA in English 2053 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Georgetown, Guyana, Dec 18, CANA—Chairman of the Sugar Association of the Caribbean [SAC] Harold Davis has accused the United States Administration of continued insensitivity to the needs of the sugar producing countries of the Caribbean basin.

Davis was responding to the decision by the U.S. Administration earlier this week to once again slash sugar quotas.

Compared with the 1987 quota, the recently announced 1988 quota from Caribbean Community (Caricom) countries represents a 28 per cent reduction—from 1,042,160 short tons in 1987 to 750,000 short tons next year whereas the overall quota for 1986 was 1,850,000 short tons.

In a statement, Davis, who was recently re-elected to serve as SAC chairman and who is also chairman of the Guyana Sugar Corporation, said the U.S. decision has hurt the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) countries for once again their foreign exchange earnings will be reduced.

It is a blatant contradiction of the U.S. Administration's avowed intention of helping to improve trade through the CBI initiative.

In other words, this move of a further cut in the sugar quota certainly cannot help to [words indistinct] which is what the CBI is intended to do.

(?As) chairman of the SAC, I can only say that this move is a sad one, but personally, it was not unexpected, Davis said.

Suriname

Lachmon Denies Aspiring Toward Presidency

FL211948 Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 21 Dec 87

[Text] I think I can serve my country best as chairman of the National Assembly, which is why I don't aspire to the position of president.

This was stated by Jaggernath Lachmon yesterday in a radio program of the Front for Democracy and Development. Lachmon said this doesn't mean he's not interested in the presidency. The 70-year old front leader said he would, of course, be proud to end his last political period in that way.

Lachmon, however, thinks he would be more useful in the Assembly since that is where the power of the people lies. Lachmon added that the front will see to it that the people who so overwhelming voted for the coalition are not disappointed.

Venezuela's Consalvi on Improved Relations

FL181855 Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 18 Dec 87

[Text] Venezuelan Foreign Minister Simon Alberto Consalvi thinks that after last Monday's general elections in Suriname the relationship between his country and Suriname has considerably improved. The Venezuelan foreign minister made this remark to his Surinamese counterpart who is currently in Venezuela for talks on (?official agreements.) Consalvi said that for Venezuela the elections in Suriname were also a historical step since he shares the view that for a good future for his country there must be democracy in neighboring countries.

Paramaribo Ceremonies Recall 1982 'Murders'

PM181355 Rotterdam NRC HANDELSBLAD in Dutch 9 Dec 87 p 3

["Own correspondent" report: "Massive Crowds Remember Murders in Paramaribo"]

[Text] Paramaribo, 9 Dec—The attempt yesterday by the Surinamese military to divert attention from the ceremony to commemorate the people killed on 8 December 1982 had the opposite effect, as far as the Moederbond trade union federation is concerned. A surprisingly large number of people, estimated at 3,000, took part in the old-fashioned "dede-oso" (deathwatch) which lasted throughout the night in memory of Cyril Daal, the Moederbond chairman who was one of the 15 people murdered.

The day began with the sound of cannons at 0600 hours for the alternative ceremony to remember the dead organized by the national Army. Around 500 soldiers marched through the streets of Paramaribo yesterday in memory of the "genuine national heroes." This ceremony was introduced overnight by the national Army in an attempt to change the spirit of 8 December.

More or less at the same time that soldiers were marching out of Fort Zeelandia in the heart of Paramaribo—accompanied by a dozen or so tanks of Brazilian manufacture—on their way to the Revolution Monument a kilometer away to lay wreaths, the Moederbond trade union federation was remembering its chairman, Cyril Daal.

In southern Paramaribo, around 10 km from the Revolution Monument, a wreath was laid on Daal's grave; a portrait of him was unveiled at the federation's offices a kilometer away on the same street. Daal was one of the 15 trade union leaders, journalists, and lawyers who were shot 8 December and whose memory the military was trying to suppress by the commemoration of genuine national heroes it introduced.

On a large wreath laid at the monument were written the names of approximately 70 men who have fallen in the battle for country and people since 25 February 1980. Two of the Army's aircraft flew low over the monument and a patrol boat was to be seen cruising on the river.

The Revolution Monument stands by the water's edge on the spot where the police headquarters, which was reduced to rubble by a gunboat 25 February 1980, stood. While the ceremony was taking place, cannons were fired at Fort Zeelandia. Commander Bouterse and his wife, the recently elected military council [militair gezag], Prime Minister Jules Wijdenbosch, Police and Army Minister Wilfred Mijnaard, and National Democratic Party politicians took part in the ceremony.

Briefs:

PRC Ambassador Presents Credentials

The new ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Suriname last week presented his credentials. During the occasion Ambassador (Chen Zuang) said that the Chinese people welcomed the progress Surinamese made in securing the national independence and a search for social democracy. [Excerpt] *[Paramaribo International Service in English 1730 GMT 21 Dec 87 FL]*

NOTES